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Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

December 22, 1989 / 45th year of publication / No. 2193

German believers give thanks as Iron Curtain lifts

BERLIN (WEF) — "We all give thanks to God." With this banner headline the largest West Berlin newspaper greeted Friday, November 10, when the wall lost its meaning. The quotation from West Berlin's Protestant Bishop Martin Kruse expressed well the feeling of the three million East Berliners and East Germans who travelled freely to the West during the following weekend.

Services of thanksgiving were held not only in Berlin, but all along the border between East and West. When the bells of the famous Kaiser Wilhelm Church in Berlin rang out, people stopped to pray in the streets. Spontaneously, church halls were converted into dormitories. All of this has been virtually overlooked by the secular press.

The Protestant churches of both East and West Germany have consistently urged East German Christians to stay and not to drain the country of its human resources. But, ironically, it was the wave of refugees that swept the old guard of the East German regime off its feet. Now the churches are encouraging the tens of thousands of young people who emigrated to the West in recent weeks to return. Some of them — many are highly trained professionals — are having second thoughts. The churches are demanding that their homes and jobs be held open for them for a specified period.

While the liberal and evangelical elements of the churches in East Germany are agreed on this issue, they have in other respects differed in their approaches.

Lutherans, Reformed paved way

Unquestionably, what were formerly the state (Lutheran and Reformed) churches in East Germany paved the way for reforms, reports Wolfgang Polzer of the (West) German Evangelical Alliance's Information Service. The church leadership attempted to steer a difficult course between the Marxist state and the people they wanted to represent as a "people church" into which Germans — at least before the war — were baptized as infants. Church buildings were the only places where people could voice their grievances openly, and they functioned as havens for dissidents of all kinds. Political gatherings masqueraded as prayer meetings. Demonstrations were launched with church services. The government struck back by confiscating church publications and making arrests.

The evangelicals, on the other hand, stressed witness and social service. At the East German Evangelical Alliance's

See **NEED** — p. 3

Thinkbit

Even a fool is considered wise ... as long as he keeps his mouth shut.

From Proverbs 17:28

Two theologians debate health of their church

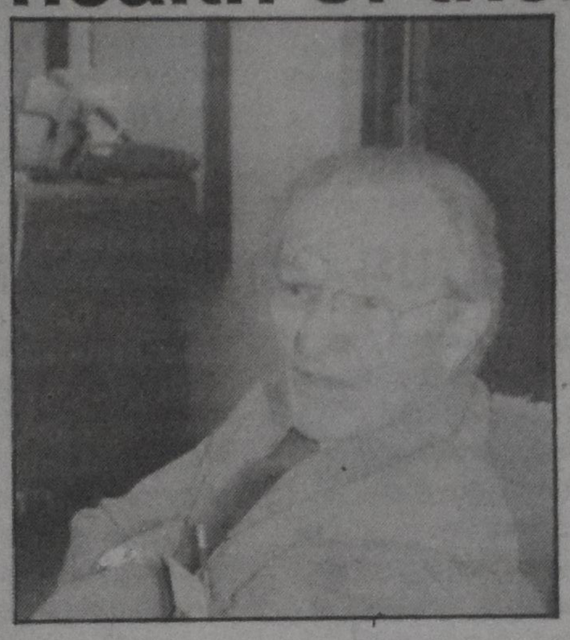


Photo: Marian Van Til

Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven.

Photo: John Van Dyk

Dr. Robert Godfrey.

Marian Van Til

ANCASTER, Ont. — Some people said they thought it was a waste of time, some said they felt it was of utmost importance, but none of the nearly 800 people who attended a public debate between two Christian Reformed Church (CRC) leaders on Dec. 11 seemed to be without an opinion — though most of them didn't want to be quoted.

The theological debate, sponsored by the Committee of Concerned Members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CCM), presented as opponents two men whom many perceive to be at opposite ends of the CRC's ideological spectrum: on the "right," Dr. Robert Godfrey, professor of church history at Westminster Seminary (California) and associate pastor of the Escondito, Calif., CRC; on the "left," Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, pastor of Bethel CRC, Waterdown, Ont., and recently retired from a 10-year editorship of *The Banner,* the denomination's weekly magazine.

The purpose of the debate, according to Mark Zylstra, development director for CCM, was "to provide a vehicle where we can listen to one another, besides talk to one another, so that we can hear what our concerns are and give concrete expression to them."

The idea arose last year in the Kalamazoo, Mich., chapter of CCM when Kuyvenhoven was still editor-in-chief of *The Banner.* Various Concerned Members have accused Kuyvenhoven of "liberalism" and unorthodoxy because of certain of his expressed views, such as favouring the ordination of women as elders and ministers (which the church currently opposes) and his implicit support of three scientists at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., whom CCM says are teaching evolution.

Few converts

Each man was allowed a 15-minute opening statement, after which they could ask three questions of each other. Finally, members of the audience could ask them questions. The topic was "The state of health of the Christian Reformed Church."

Kuyvenhoven spoke first because he was seen "to represent the affirmative position on this," explained moderator Ted Plantinga, a philosophy professor at Redeemer College where the debate was being held.

Kuyvenhoven began by admitting, "I don't expect to make many converts." He grounded his remarks in the fact that he "loves the Lord and his Church," but "we're all concerned about different things." He felt it was not a great topic, because no one but God can *ultimately* judge the health of the church; and if the church is sick, the greatest damage is done by people who set themselves up as its judges. He regretted the formation of CCM and of Mid-America Reformed Seminary (Orange City, Iowa), both of which he feels have been divisive and harmful to the church.

"Women in church office and evolution are not the most burning issues we face," asserted Kuyvenhoven, referring to two issues that Concerned Members are writing and speaking much about. He then made some short comments on those issues. He cited examples to prove "you don't have to be a liberal to be in favour of women in office."

Regarding evolution, Kuyvenhoven told the audience that he and many Reformed people were "never taught that the six days of creation *must* be taken literally," viewed as "the *way* in which God created the world." But a non-literal view of Creation's six days is very different from evolutionism. "I am fully conscious of the arrogance of evolutionism. We must reject it as a spirit that's against creation."

Kuyvenhoven's assessment of the Christian Reformed Church? "There are very few liberals in the CRC, but fundamentalism is rampant, and we have no problem with that." We must assert that "the whole Bible is inspired, the key to biblical revelation is Jesus Christ, and we must read all parts of scripture in light of the whole."

Kuyvenhoven ended his remarks by advising, "We as a church must calm down. Mass rallies can fire people up, but they don't put people on fire for the Lord."

See **MAKING** — p. 2

Winter scene from Nova Scotia

Photo: Anne Hutten

Oxen are still occasionally used by Nova Scotia woodspeople, but are seen primarily at agricultural exhibitions.

In this issue:

Christianity is alive and well in the Third World ..... pp. 10-11
High school students try their hand at poetry ..... p. 12

Making disciples?

... continued from page 1.

Robert Godfrey said the church's health must be measured by its response to Christ's Great Commission: to make disciples .... In saying that, Godfrey admitted he didn't mean "how many numbers; we're not doing a terribly good job in that." Christ wasn't just talking about bringing people in, Godfrey said, "He was talking about making *followers:* Christ told his disciples to "teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you."

Godfrey says he has spent a great deal of time observing how churches try to be disciples of Christ. Many formerly faithful churches succumbed to a "rationalistic, secularistic point of view."

His assessment of the Christian Reformed Church?

Godfrey said he agreed that women's ordination and evolution are not the great issues facing the CRC. "I'm concerned about how we understand God's Word," said Godfrey. "There's been a decline in its Reformed character and commitment and an appeal to emotion."

"Calvinistic church after Calvinistic church has walked down the path of rationalism. Bodies once bastions of Reformed faith are now dominated by liberalism," asserted Godfrey. "Why do some in our church think that the CRC isn't going down the same path? We are not guaranteed that the CRC will remain forever faithful."

(See accompanying story, **DEBATE QUESTIONS**, this page).

Debate questions focus on women, evolution and the creeds

Marian Van Til

ANCASTER, Ont. — The Dec. 11 debate between Christian Reformed pastor/theologians Andrew Kuyvenhoven and Robert Godfrey (see front page story) put the men, who had previously "debated" in print, face to face.

After initial statements by each of them, the questions the two men asked each other focused on interpreting the Bible in light of its cultural elements (a question which raised the issue of women's ordination); the "form of subscription" which office-bearers must sign stating their agreement with the church's doctrines; the Bible's "inerrancy" (Kuyvenhoven prefers the term "infallible" because of the fundamentalist roots of "inerrancy" and its "implications in a technical age"); and whether there is "movement toward freedom" in the Bible, a question which again raised the issue of ordaining women. Audience members brought up other questions on the same and similar topics.

How fruitful should you be?

Godfrey said the Bible's cultural conditioning must be dealt with by examining texts in their contexts (Kuyvenhoven did not disagree). The command "Be fruitful and multiply," which Kuyvenhoven raised as an example, does not mean your children must have 12 children because your parents did. "We must fulfill that command appropriately to our own time," said Godfrey. However, that does not mean that women being ordained is appropriate to our time, he said. "We must fulfil the command [in our time] that women must be silent in all the churches."

Godfrey admitted that even his 12-year-old daughter didn't like what he told her regarding women in the church. "It stinks," she had told him; but he countered her with, "Who are you to question the teachings of the apostle?" Though Godfrey admitted that it didn't seem fair, that doesn't mean men and women are not equal before God. But God has spoken, so he must be obeyed, said Godfrey.

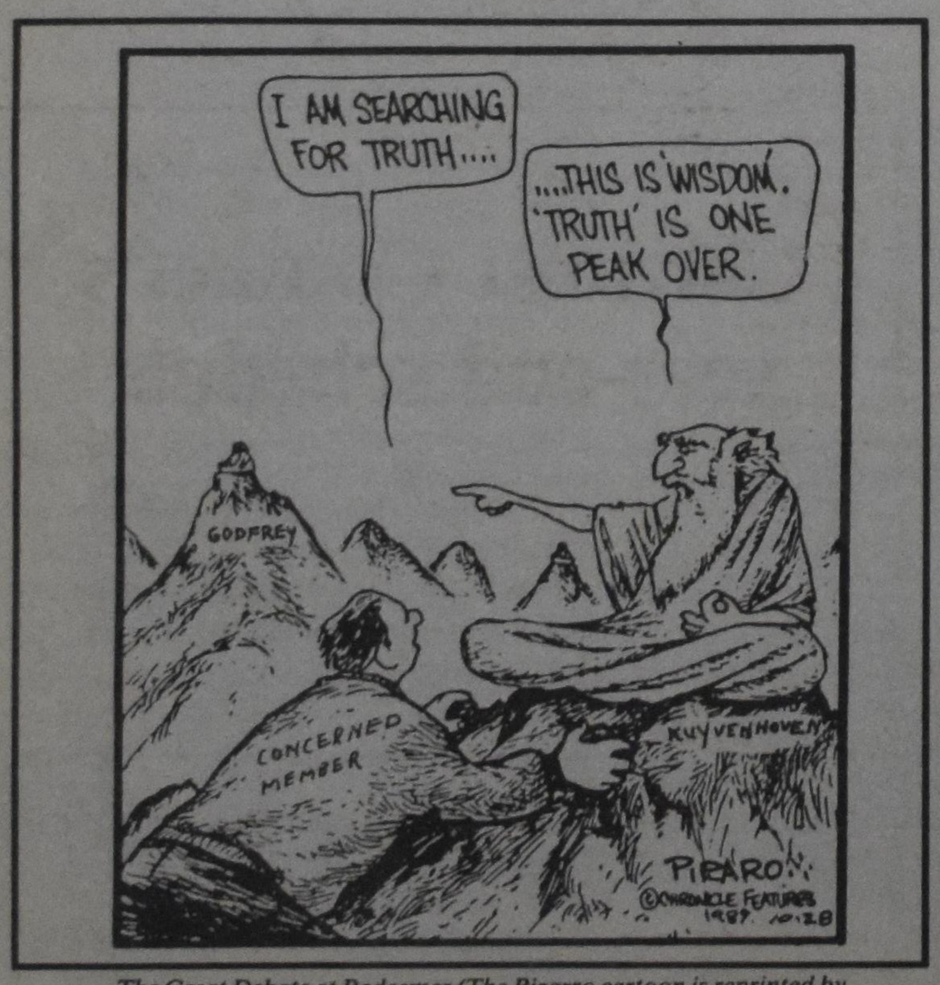
Regarding the form of subscription and the church's confessions (the *Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dort,* and *Belgic Confession),* Kuyvenhoven, though he loves them and has preached out of and written about them for years, said that he firmly believes that the church must "re-state the truth in an up-to-date form, so that everyone knows what he or she confesses."

All of the audience questions were addressed to the speaker with whom the questioner disagreed and wished to challenge. The issue of women's ordination was raised to both men. Roger Van Oostveen of St. Catharines, Ont., quoting from someone else, asked Kuyvenhoven if synod decided to allow women to be ordained and we thank God for that when synod is over, will we do the same thing if the CRC were to ordain homosexuals? Kuyvenhoven, visibly startled by the question reminded the questioner that while we must accept homosexuals, practising homosexuality is clearly contrary to God's ordinances; was the questioner equating being a woman with being a homosexual?

Kuyvenhoven was asked by CCM head Mark Zylstra from St. Catharines, and by college student Raphael Gritter, also from St. Catharines, which parts of the form of subscription and the confessions he wanted to "discard." (Regarding the "form": "I have signed them and I stand behind my signature but I do not think they use very happy language. I don't think they're very understandable." Regarding the confessions: "I *don't* want to discard them. I have taught the confessions longer than this brother can remember living. But they are out of date, out of step with our time. We need something we can put in our own words, which we can understand and confess."

Rev. Dick Wynia of Aylmer, Ont., asked if we shouldn't be concerned about astronomer Howard Van Till's view of scripture, citing a statement in Van Till's book *The Fourth Day* that Adam didn't have to be a separate creation. Kuyvenhoven agreed that Van Till shouldn't have said that, and added that "the church is taking that seriously." He

Continued on page 3 ...



The Great Debate at Redeemer (The Bizarro cartoon is reprinted by permission of Chronicle Features, San Francisco, Calif.)

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken, Jim Romahn

33 hours

Wed., Dec. 6, 11:55 p.m.

I'd been sleeping for an hour when my wife came home from work. "Did you watch the news?" she asked. "No," I mumbled. "Some guy went into a university classroom in Montreal, separated the men from the women, and shot all the women."

She dropped off to sleep, but I lay awake for a while. My full-time "career" right now involves sitting in university classrooms. I tried to picture the scene. Would I have just stood there watching women being massacred? I don't know. Eventually I fell asleep and had several violent dreams ...; running, guns, shooting, panic.

Thurs., Dec. 7, 7:15 a.m.

I was comfortably seated on the commuter bus, studying for one of my exams. There were several accidents along Hwy. 400 in places where the road was flat, straight and not slippery. "People must be feeling jittery," I thought. An hour later I was standing on the subway. One of the subway doors refused to close properly, and at every stop a little man in a brown uniform came running out to wrestle it shut. Riders cursed him under their breath as he struggled. "What's up?" I wondered, "the whole world is jittery."

Thurs., 10:30 a.m.

My old Testament studies class broke into small groups to discuss Amnon's rape of his half-sister, Tamar (II Sam. 13:1-22). The discussion unleashed such anger in three of the women in our group that the exercise quickly became pointless. Or, at least, its point was redefined, though we had no time to clarify just what the point was. I have no doubt that sitting in a university classroom a few hours west on Hwy. 401 from that other classroom, discussing a violent crime against a woman, generated the intense heat.

Thurs., 10:30 p.m.

My wife and I came home and clicked on the CBC Journal. We knew what the topic would be. They interviewed two survivors, women who had been shot at but not hit. They interviewed several men who had been there, and asked each one, "What was the expression on his face? What was he like?" They showed hundreds of reporters mobbing the campus. They showed thousands of people quietly walking around the university, keeping vigil. One woman was there because she worked with battered women. Another woman felt encouraged, "There are just as many men here as women. That man was insane. He is not a symbol of our society." The CBC's handling of the story was gentle, slow-moving and sad; it was not sensationalized or hyped. Even so, it became clear what the media was doing with the story: building up suspense concerning the identity and psychological make-up of the killer.

Fri., Dec. 8, 8:30 a.m.

While driving to a substitute-teaching assignment, I saw a huge portrait of him staring out from a newspaper box. When I arrived at the school, the doors were locked and students and teachers were milling around the parking lot. "A teen-aged girl phoned in a bomb threat. We have to wait for the police to declare the building safe." Forty-five minutes later we were all inside, but the day, which had started with a threatening bang, whimpered along.

Are all these events related? I just don't know. How does the news affect you? Is evil contagious? Is insanity contagious? Are fear and anger contagious?

Syd Hielema studies at Wycliffe College in Toronto.

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

Born to an age where horror has become commonplace, we were nevertheless jolted when that dreadful continuum of Lord's Day 40 — belittle, insult, hate, kill — reached its terrible terminal in the murder of 14 students at L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. The whole country went into mourning and intense self-examination. The ghastly event must lead to fierce condemnation of even the most benign and patronizing belittling of women.

★★★★

Monsieur is about to pull the old good cop, bad cop trick. Wilson being the bad nine per cent cop with Monsieur in the manner of a generous patron lowering it to seven per cent. Take note though: the GST was introduced in New Zealand at 10 per cent in October 1986. The annual rate of inflation jumped immediately from 11 per cent to 18 per cent, and the government raised the tax in March 1989 by 2.5 per cent.

★★★★

We are now into the second year of the government's second mandate: VIA Rail is being dismantled, Air Canada is being privatized, universality will be eliminated for family allowances and old age pensions, there are reduced benefits for less people due to changes in the act that covers unemployment insurance; plant closures are causing more people to be without work, and there is no real peace between Ottawa and the provinces. We are in the throes of neo-conservatism which in other places in the world is in the process of being discarded.

★★★★

No Christmas card this year from me to the Prescott-Russell separate school board. Trustees of that board have stopped sports between English and French students for fear of linguistic contamination. "Bilingualism" is just an unintelligible word to the trustees of that board, as is "common sense."

★★★★

The recent rise in the Canadian dollar is spurring residents along the border to do their Christmas shopping in the U.S. The October statistics show a 26 per cent increase in the number of people paying import duties in the first six months of 1989. This increase does not take into account the people who practise that old Canadian pastime of smuggling.

★★★★

In August of this year an all-part committee of the Alberta legislative assembly approved a nice 30 per cent pay hike. Now Albertans are complaining that the raise — the second major hike in two years — flies in the face of fiscal responsibility. Much of the anger is directed toward one man: Don Getty. Members of his own riding are insisting that he rescind the raise. Fat chance! Premier Getty's popularity is almost touching the freezing point, and Wilhelmus Maria's popularity among the voters of B.C. is not at a much higher level.

★★★★

And here is a courteous bow of admiration in the direction of the most senior woman cabinet minister, Barbara McDougall, who in the House rose spontaneously to welcome Audrey McLaughlin. The surprise of the day was the Yukon lady's agility with the French language. *C'est bien comme comme ca, Madame.*

★★★★

Move over, Karl Marx. The political communist monopoly in East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia is finished and the waves of democracy are lapping at the Kremlin's door, where Comrade Gorbachev is like the legendary Dutch boy with his finger sticking in the dike. We don't know for how long the Communist Party can hold on to its privileged position, even in the Soviet Union.

★★★★

Mrs. Thatcher has lost her neo-conservative touch. The English economy, once her pride and glory, is heading down the slopes into a recession under the weight of a 15 per cent interest rate. Bank of Canada, pay attention please!

★★★★

Unable to get the better of the Eritrean and Tigrean rebels on the battlefield or at the negotiating table, Ethiopia's president, Mengustu Haile Mariam, now is starving his opponents into submission. As a result, renewed famine threatens the lives of more than four million people in the war-ravaged and largely rebel-controlled northern provinces.

★★★★

And here is an example of the economic value of that old queen of the sciences: theology. Sturgeon lack the sort of scales to make them *halal* — acceptable under Islamic precepts. So they could not be caught in Iran, which meant the death to that country's not insignificant export of caviar. But in 1982 a mullah from a Caspian fishing village conveniently turned up a sturgeon with a few of the right scales. After weighing this new evidence the theologians in Tehran gave their blessing to caviar, which will bring in about $250 a kilogram in hard currency; and that is nothing to sneeze at. Hurrah for the theologians.

★★★★

No theology was needed to revive the entrepreneurial spirit of a Texan who calls himself Jeff Nightbyrd. Jeff found a little niche for himself in the market and he is now selling powdered, drug-free urine. Business is going well, thank you.

★★★★

Christmas! We celebrate it while we pray for peace on earth, but also for ourselves, kinder and gentler churches. May he who came continue to be among us and soothe the theological lacerations that disfigure so many of us Christians.

Carl Tuyl is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont.

Debate questions

... continued from page 2.

explained that the committee looking after the matter was made up of people from the whole spectrum of thought in the CRC and is chaired by a "conservative," Rev. Henry Vanden Heuvel.

Godfrey was asked by journalism student Allison DeGroot from Waterdown, Ont., if a woman is lying to herself or to others if she says she feels called by the Holy Spirit to be a minister or elder. ("She's not lying, she's just wrong, as some men who think they are called are wrong.")

Rev. Jake Kuipers of Sarnia, Ont., challenged Godfrey to reconcile the "inconsistency of his position" with the CRC's allowing women to occupy what Godfrey earlier suggested is the most crucial position in the church — that of teacher (Sunday school, Catechism classes) — while raising the ordained offices to the level of idolatry and excluding women from them. He reminded Godfrey that *all* of us are called to be prophets, priest and kings and "we all, not just men, share in Christ's anointing." ("It's not inconsistent; whatever God's Word says we must obey," Godfrey replied.)

Most of the other questions addressed to him referred to the Committee of Concerned Members itself, the group's purpose, its focus on theological issues rather than people's needs, and the perceived power struggle between its members and the current church establishment.

Need spiritual reform

... continued from page 1.

annual conference last August, Chairman Jurgen Stabe asserted to the gathering of 5,000 believers, predominantly young, that a Christian's sphere of ministry is where he lives and works, and that, within the restrictions of their situation, "Christians can live their faith in East Germany too." He emphasized the vital role of believers to provide a religious point of reference for the majority of East Germans, who "have lost their bearings and do not know where to turn with their thoughts and worries."

Communist ideologists have had to accept that religion will not simply wither away, church leaders say. But still, the general picture is one of a highly secularized society, in deep need of spiritual renewal, not only political reform. What was once regarded as the "homeland of the Reformation" is ripe for re-evangelization. Recently published church statistics reveal that in traditionally Protestant East Germany less than 33 per cent (5.1 million) of the 15 million citizens still claim allegiance to the Protestant churches. (Unlike in West Germany, where the 26 million Catholics have overtaken the Protestants, the Roman Catholics have only around one million members in the East.)

All German Christians welcomed the surprising events, which many had been praying for ever since the Berlin wall was erected in August of 1961. But the leaders of the East German Evangelical Alliance also warned against undue euphoria. Chairman Stabe said that the happy mood should not divert attention from the many problems still waiting to be solved. Reform groups would have to gain stature if they were to seriously challenge the Communist party in free elections. And the churches, he noted, would have to find a proper balance between political and spiritual activities.

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Holiday Greetings

ATTENTION ATTENTION

Calvinist Contact's year-end schedule

As part of our original schedule, **Calvinist Contact** will skip an issue on **Friday, December 29.**

The first 1990 issue will be dated **Friday, January 5.** We plan to finalize this issue and send it off to the printers **prior** to Christmas 1989. *Deadline for the January 5 issue will be Wednesday, December 20.*

All our readers and/or advertisers are urged to take note!

Stan de Jong
Manager

Calvinist Contact

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Editor: Bert Witvoet
Gen. Mgr.: Stan de Jong
Associate Editor: Marian Van Til
Assistant Editor: Robert Vander Vennen
Regular Contributors: Paul De Groot, Stan de Jong, Anne Hutten, Reinder J. Klein, Angela Terpstra, Nandy Heule
Accounting: Amy Van Dokkumburg
Advertising: Suzanna Brasz
Circulation & Mailing: Grace Bowman
Layout & Design: Cecilia van Wylick
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Editorials

After the massacre

The horrendous act of mowing down 14 defenceless women by Marc Lepine will be etched in the consciousness of Canadians for years to come. The most emotionally tearing aspect of the event that took place on December 6 between 5 and 6 p.m. was the fact that a man chose to kill women because he hated them. If I were a woman I would be deeply hurt by what must be seen as a symbolic act: an act that encapsulates — in a very extreme way, to be sure — what is wrong with the way men treat women. Because I am a man, I am deeply ashamed.

The reason I can speak about this in such an unqualifying way is because sexism is a virus deeply embedded in our culture. There is not a man in Canada who does not carry the virus, and there's not a woman who does not carry the antibodies, showing that she has been fighting the disease in the past. Often she succumbs to the sickness.

Sexism is evident in our advertising, our operas, our comic books, our serious literature, our clothing, in the use of public transportation (men are too macho for buses), in our jokes, our dating and courting, our parties, our love making, our wage earning, our promotions, our calendars, our church life and church leadership, our housekeeping and meal making, in the nurture of children ...; we didn't even include in this list such obvious things as pimps and prostitutes, sexual and physical abuse, rape and strip joints.

How shall the young redirect our way?

Because of this all-pervasive presence of sexism, I would like to address this editorial to the next generation of Canadians. My first advice to you is, as far as male and female relations is concerned, please don't take your cue from my generation. Search for new forms that will recognize women as equal partners in all expressions of life. Examine every joke that my generation tells and evaluate every book and calendar for evidence of sexism. Challenge the present employment situation, better yet, change it when you are in a position to do so, so that people are treated according to their abilities, not their gender.

Don't buy my generation's biblicistic argument that God passes on authority positions to men only, even in the church. Try riding buses, regardless of your sex. Ask yourselves whether women should doll themselves up so that they can be treated as dolls. Try mutual submission instead of dominance as a way of relating. Try caressing your lover without thinking of intercourse. Insist that both husband and wife get involved in the nurture of children. Rethink the matter of housekeeping roles, especially if both spouses work out of the home.

Sexism, like racism, like economic and political elitism, is so endemic to human society because no one gives up power and privilege without resistance. One observer had it right: men will change only to the extent that women force them to.

Can anything good come out of the December 6 Montreal massacre? That's difficult to say. Who knows, there may even be a backlash of those who fear feminists. But in Christ, new beginnings are always possible. Maybe the next generation will lead the way to a society of mutual respect and honour.

BW

A response to Montreal

Mary VanderVennen

Fourteen young women cut down in the prime of life. Not because they were in a war zone, not because they had been provocative, not because they had "asked for it," not because they enjoyed pain, not because they had done anything at all to the murderer. No, none of these things. They were killed simply because they were women.

I wept this morning as I watched nine white caskets slowly being carried out of Montreal's Notre Dame Cathedral. But gradually my tears turned to outrage as I listened to the banalities of the TV commentators and to a statement attributed to a cardinal, may God forgive him, to the effect that we must accept this tragedy as coming from the hand of God and carry on.

When are we Christians going to stop living out of the curse? When will we realize that it was the original sin which destroyed the partnership God created between male and female, and that it was the curse on sin which set male over and against female? What will it take to open our eyes to the fact that sexism, patriarchy, and violence as a way of disciplining children or settling quarrels between peoples is the result of God's curse on humanity? And when will we accept responsibility for the fact that when we espouse and practise these things we are playing into the hands of the Evil One?

Undo the curse

We are in the Christmas season, celebrating Christ's coming to undo the curse. Christ by his life and death restored the partnership between male and female and restored our communion with God. How long will we continue to sing our Christmas carols, but in terms of the position of women relative to men, act as though he had not come?

Don't mistake this event as a sad but isolated instance of one man suddenly gone crazy. Don't identify Marc Lepine as "one of those crazy ...," fill in the blank. A Marc Lepine is one inevitable consequence of generations of people and thousands of years of an historical process in which violence against women and children (read accounts of his battered childhood) has been sanctioned by men.

Unless we view the Montreal tragedy through redeemed eyes, unless we see it as one climactic point in the agonizing outworking of the curse on the original sin which divided man from woman and both from God, we will miss any possibility of redemptive meaning the event might have. God forbid that we should accept it, put it behind us and carry on, as the cardinal and the TV commentators advise.

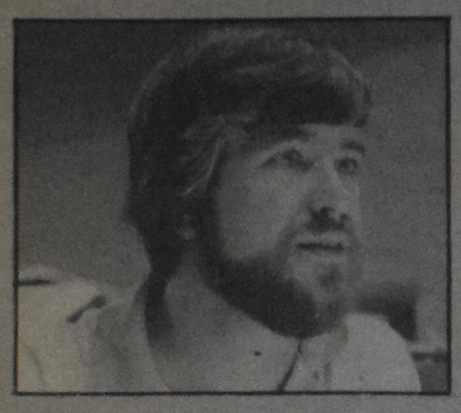
We need rather to stop. We need to recognize that what happened in Montreal is one consequence of what we have believed and practised for so long, namely that men by virtue of being male have dominance over women and children. We need to confess that the church for much too long has acted out of God's curse on sin rather than out of God's redemption in Jesus Christ.

We need to repent.

And we need to change.

Mary VanderVennen is a psychotherapist at Christian Counselling Services in Toronto.

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



It is acknowledged that neither convict prisons, nor the hulks, nor any system of hard labour ever cured a criminal. (F. Dostoyevsky, 1821-1881, The House of the Dead, *Part I, Ch. 2)*

Since September I have been working as an intern chaplain in the Ontario Correctional Institute in Brampton, Ont. It is a rather different experience for me, to say the least. Any prison, no matter how well-appointed or how well-run, is still a place of confinement and, even if people may not like to hear or use the word, a place of punishment where a number of privileges are taken away.

Prison is also a place where the question always looms large: Will the prisoner be rehabilitated or will the system fail to do so? Will people begin to take responsibility for themselves or will they leave only to return later, only going from bad to worse?

As you can see in the quote at the head of this column, the famous Russian author (and prisoner) Fyodor Dostoyevsky had a very dim view of the matter about a century ago. The only "cure" for the criminal, he was convinced, lay in the inner change of the person. And that inner self could be reached only by God.

Dostoyevsky was a fellow Christian, and I think I agree with him, even though, like him, I'm no penologist or even remotely expert in the theories of rehabilitation that are current. And, like him, I don't think this is due to any pessimism on my part, or a sour view on life, but rather the opposite. I think that God's grace can burst through any barrier and any wall, even a prison wall, even the stubborn defenses of my own sinful heart.

Breaking our complacency

I am overwhelmed by that again in this Christmas season especially. The words of the Scriptures ring in my ears:

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

God can reach into every corner of creation through Jesus our Lord, his gift to a fallen world on Christmas Day. The danger that we face, you and I, is that we confine the liberating work of Jesus Christ to "those who really need it," to wit: prisoners, public sinners, rotten humanists and those horrible people who push drugs in our streets. The dangerous thing is that we think that we "have" Jesus already (in our hearts, no less!) and that we celebrate that cosily amongst ourselves this season.

The facts are different, of course. The Saviour has come to set us free — to break us out of our complacency, to liberate us from the evil one, to help us escape the prison house of the darkness of sin. Just as real-life prisons do not rehabilitate people by themselves, so our lives are not "saved" either by living in a duplex or a townhouse. Only Jesus saves. And he has to save us all from the power of sin. Every day.

May this Christmas season bring to us a sense of wonder and awe again, that our great God can break through even our greatest sin and receive us in grace together with a murderer on a cross, cowardly disciples, and a repentant prostitute. A company of saints: that's the miracle! A miracle for me. And you?

Herman D. Praamsma is associate pastor of Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Toronto and is currently an intern at the Ontario Correctional Institute in Brampton.

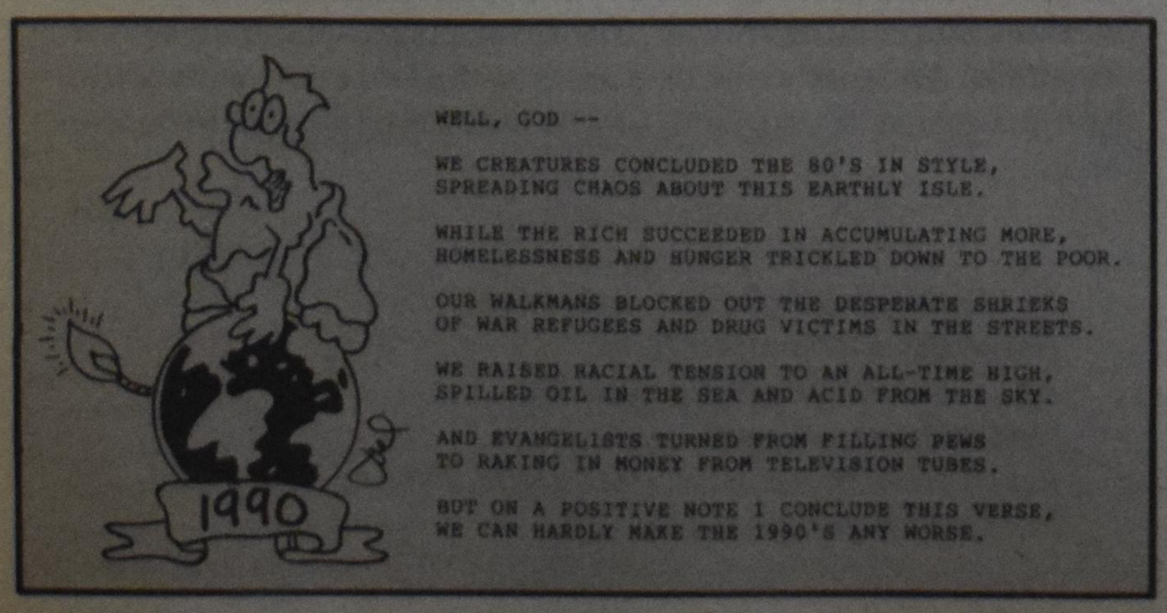
Men can't dance for the Lord

Re: "Dance in God's honour" (C.C. Nov. 24).

I think John Vandervelde should have stayed with his engineering job. We need good engineers in this country, especially with Free Trade coming in.

What's this ballet dancing he's gotten into? Sissy stuff, as far as I can see. I believe he's wasting his talents. And then to say we dance for the Lord!

J. VanderHeide
Lindsay, Ont.


1990
WELL, GOD --
WE CREATURES CONCLUDED THE 80'S IN STYLE,
SPREADING CHAOS ABOUT THIS EARTHLY ISLE.
WHILE THE RICH SUCCEEDED IN ACCUMULATING MORE,
HOMELESSNESS AND HUNGER TRICKLED DOWN TO THE POOR.
OUR WALKMANS BLOCKED OUT THE DESPERATE SHRIEKS
OF WAR REFUGEES AND DRUG VICTIMS IN THE STREETS.
WE RAISED RACIAL TENSION TO AN ALL-TIME HIGH,
SPILLED OIL IN THE SEA AND ACID FROM THE SKY.
AND EVANGELISTS TURNED FROM FILLING PEWS
TO RAKING IN MONEY FROM TELEVISION TUBES.
BUT ON A POSITIVE NOTE I CONCLUDE THIS VERSE,
WE CAN HARDLY MAKE THE 1990'S ANY WORSE.

Longer Letter

Book dismissed by innuendo

In the November 10 issue of *Calvinist Contact,* Pastor Leonard Schalkwyk published a polemical letter entitled "Bible Held Hostage." The topic of discussion in that column is a book entitled *Science Held Hostage,* written by Howard Van Till, Clarence Menninga, and Davis A. Young, published in 1988 by InterVarsity Press. Although Pastor Schalkwyk makes favourable comments on parts of that book, the very title of his column is a transparent attack on other parts of the book.

The thesis of the book *Science Held Hostage* is that various groups of people have misused science in the interest of a particular point of view or perspective, and that such improper uses of science ought to be identified among us Christians so that we can recognize the proper use of science and not be misguided by its illegitimate uses. Examples of the misuse of science in the interest of a particular perspective were taken from two major areas; the claim that science supports the worldview of godless naturalism, and the claim that science supports the view that the Earth is young and that the fossil-bearing rock layers on Earth were deposited by a single worldwide flood of water.

Pastor Schalkwyk applauds us for identifying the claim that science provides support for godless naturalism as a misuse of science. Our examples of the misuses of science in the interest of young-Earthism, however, are characterized by Pastor Schalkwyk as "Bible held hostage."

The world we live in is God's world. The proper study of that world by the methods of science is the study of God's handiwork. Proper scientific study has an integrity which is derived from the ordered nature of the universe as created by the God of order. Scientific explanations are based on and tested by the ordered regularities which we have observed in the processes and structure of the universe. Any use of science which fails to take full account of observed regularities in the evaluation of scientific explanations prostitutes the integrity of science as a proper study of God's world.

The methods of science limit proper scientific study to explanations which are based on observed regularities in processes and structure. Science does not provide a proper basis for anyone's philosophical worldview; such a worldview is derived from sources outside the proper domain of science. Any use of science which stands outside of those limitations is also a violation of the proper use of science as a study of God's world.

The case studies which are considered in *Science Held Hostage* were treated from within the perspective of our Christian belief that the God of the Scriptures is the Creator and Governor of the universe. Our analysis of those cases was based entirely on scientific evidences and consistency with the integrity and limitations of proper scientific study. We did not argue for or against any particular interpretation of Scripture.

Pastor Schalkwyk's characterization of our book as "Bible held hostage" is a gross and insulting misrepresentation of our work as Christian scholars. Pastor Schalkwyk has the right to disagree with our judgments in those matters, of course, but he ought to express his disagreement by a serious discussion of the matters involved rather than simply dismissing our work by innuendo.

Clarence Menninga
Professor of Geology
Calvin College
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Book criticized for things not mentioned

Perhaps Pastor Schalkwyk read *Science Held Hostage* a bit too hastily and read into this book some material on which it was silent. We did *not* "look at the Bible" in the chapters on creationism. What we did look at were several examples of *scientific* claims made by the proponents of "creation-science." By their own request, advocates of "scientific creationism" wish to have their claims for recent creation evaluated on the basis of their scientific merit. We did so and found them to be woefully inadequate.

Furthermore, contrary to Pastor Schalkwyk's assertions, the concepts of "primeval history" and "packaging" in reference to biblical interpretation are not even mentioned in *Science Held Hostage.*

Shouldn't "pastoral letters" of this sort be preceded by careful homework?

Howard J. Van Till
Professor of Physics
Calvin College
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Response by Leonard Schalkwyk

Dear Professors:

Thank you for joining the growing rank of readers of my column.

Thank you also for the review of your book which you give in this letter to *Calvinist Contact.*

Of course, I can agree with what you write in *Calvinist Contact,* but I cannot agree with what you do not write and yet is in your book. Indeed, it is the core of your book, the very purpose for writing it. You promise the reader "help for all who are discontent with the current impasse in the creation-evolution debate" (back cover). And then the question is asked whether there are only two options: "The one promoted by creation scientists and the other by evolutionary naturalists" (back cover).

In the book you proceed to rightly refute fundamentalist creationism, that needs the Grand Canyon and the dust from the moon to "prove" creation. And you attack to the left those who consider that evolution necessarily rules out belief in God.

So far so good. But now the clincher: you propose that we accept evolution as a scientific fact, but retain the belief that God is the prime mover and guide of everything.

The scientific domain

You make that position very clear on page 39 as you write: "We shall focus briefly on the function of religious commitments in scientific investigation

Continued on page 6 ...

Letters

... continued from page 5.

...." We do not wish to restrict it to the Christian religion, not even to theism in general." And you continue on page 40: "Religious commitments cannot be used as a warrant to ignore or to consciously violate the boundaries of the scientific domain." This becomes even clearer on page 41 as you state: "Religious commitments, whether theistic or non-theistic, should not be permitted to interfere with the normal functioning of the epistemic value system employed within the scientific community."

"Science held hostage by an ideology or belief system, whether naturalistic or theistic, can no longer function effectively." (page 41).

Here, gentlemen, the authority of the Bible is at stake. Christian education is at stake.

You yourself have felt this, as on page 42 you ask, "Are we then left with the implication that religious belief is held hostage by the results of an autonomous natural science?" You solve that problem by stating on page 43: "The Bible contains a rich diversity of forms of historical literature — forms often very different from what we are accustomed to."

I could quote more material to show that I did not misunderstand you at all, nor did I misrepresent any part of your book.

Crisis in schools

It becomes very evident that the solution you suggest in "the current impasse in the creation-evolution debate" is: theistic evolution. Which means you accept evolution, but confess that theos (God) is the prime mover and guider of it all. This seems a good compromise. The difficulty is: the Bible does not teach it and must therefore be re-interpreted. If I am allowed to re-interpret Genesis 1, why not Genesis 2 and why not Matthew 1?

That is why the average person senses there is something wrong. Evolution is taught in the public school, but the Christian School teaches creation.

This is not a theoretical question. If you teach our prospective teachers theistic evolution and they will teach it in our Christian schools, there will be a crisis. Now already 20 per cent of the donors have said that "their trust in Calvin College had decreased because of the creation-science controversy." *(Calvin Today,* Fall 1989).

How do you think your teaching will affect our Christian elementary schools and Christian high schools?

The Christian Reformed Church has always rejected evolution in any form, not because it was fundamentalist, but because it saw it as non-scriptural.

Even though the Christmas story comes to us from a different time and age, may it yet bless your heart and may the living Christ give you many more years of work in his Kingdom.

Leonard Schalkwyk
Springdale, Ont.

Not that austere

I would like to comment on Jacoba Bos's report on the 25th anniversary of the London District Christian Secondary School (C.C. Dec. 8). She writes: The 27 pioneer students in 1965 received their first education in the living room of a small house purchased by the society. The house's garage served as an additional classroom and wooden crates served as lockers."

This sounds very cosy and it seems rather sacrificial on the part of staff and students, but it is not true.

We happen to live in that "small house," which was a three-room school, bought by the society from the board of education of the city of London. The main floor consisted of a large classroom, a small staffroom, a small kitchen and a boys' and a girls' washroom. The basement consisted of the same size classroom, which our board later divided to make two rooms, and a storage room. The lockers, also in the basement, were no crates, but built-in open square boxes. The back part was the third classroom, which was the kindergarten room, before our school society bought the school.

We bought the building in 1971 and my husband made it into a most comfortable home.

Trudy Ferwerda
243 Tremont Rd.
London, Ont.

Year-end meditation

It's good to steel yourself against the hard times

I was having a troublesome dream the other night. I don't recall the details, but I do know that at the end a line from Mendelsohn's *Elijah* came through strongly: "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved." I was much comforted by this line, as it resounded several times through the halls of my dreaming mind.

Endurance is a quality that is highly spoken of in the Bible. Paul wishes that the Colossians may be "strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance" (Col. 1:11). And on the island of Patmos, John, after he talks about the persecution unleashed by the beast rising up out of the sea, says, "This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints" (Rev. 13:10).

Endurance is something that a young woman lying in a bed next to mine in a testing clinic knew very little about. She told me how she had fasted since the night before, and how hard it had been. Her friends had teased her with food. And now, that she had had the test, could she not call her mother on the phone to tell her how tired she was? The nurse told her that she could not, that she had to rest a bit. The young woman asked how long I had fasted. Three days, I told her. She looked surprised for a minute, but then concentrated again on the fact that she could not wait to have a smoke and a hamburger. I was amused at how little endurance the person next to me was able to muster in her time of ... trial is not the word ... inconvenience.

When I was young

The word endurance has an interesting origin. It comes from the French word *dure,* which means "hard." A person who shows endurance has often been hardened by suffering and struggle. It's a quality that some of us developed because war times and immigration experiences toughened us.

Not that I can ever mention this to our kids without having them go into a spoof on how hard the olden days were. They quote from a tape recording by Monty Python on the hardships of the good old days: "When I was a kid, my father used to whip us to bed. We lived in a shoebox in the middle of the road, and every morning we had to get up and lick the road clean with our tongue. Why, you guys had it easy. We had it rough. We lived in a brown paper bag and we used to wake up half an hour before we went to bed. Oh yeah? Listen to this. We used to live at the bottom of the lake, and we had to drink it empty before we went to work." Their lampoonery effectively kills whatever sermon I may have had in mind.

A flexible strength

Of course, when the scriptures talk about endurance, it does not have the kind of toughness in mind that kids might ridicule and parents might boast about. Some people are as tough as nails, but there's no future in their hardness. It's the hardness of shells, rather than the toughness of muscles, to which they have resorted. What the Bible always has in mind when it talks about endurance is a flexible kind of toughness that is integrated into the quality of love and hope and faith.

Christian endurance is the perseverance of holding on to the promises of God, no matter what. It's a saving kind of toughness.

As the end of 1989 comes into view and the days get shorter, I do not want to let go of the comforting thought that if we endure to the end, we shall be saved. Does it then depend on us after all? *We* must endure? *We* must hold on to the end? Psalm 136 tells us that there is one thing that endures forever, that never lets go — God's love. It never fails. And that's why God dares to challenge us to endure to the end, because he surrounds us with everything we need to hang in there.

BW

Frail as summer's flower we flourish;
Blows the wind and it is gone;
But, while mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on:
Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise Him.
Praise the high eternal One.

Music

Ronald Greydanus, countertenor: an unusual profession

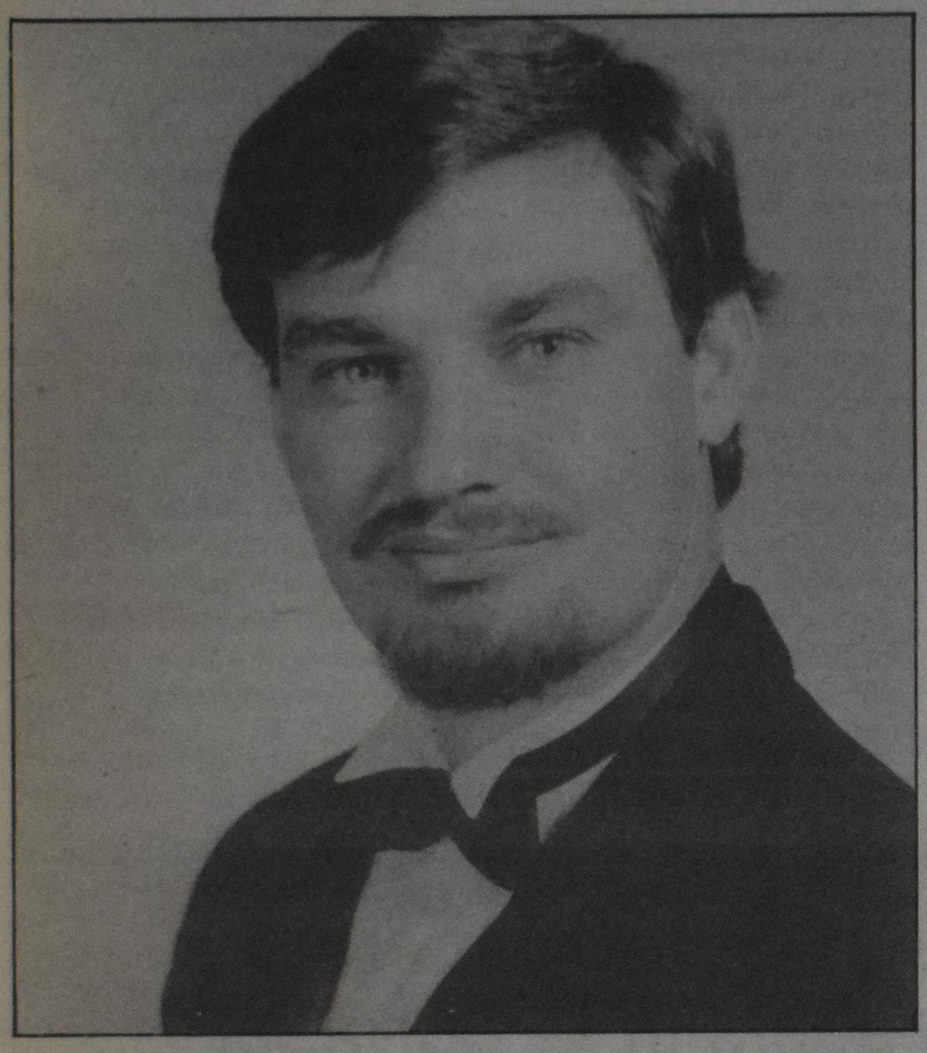


Photo: courtesy Ronald Greydanus

Countertenor Ron Greydanus hopes to have enough singing engagements in the future to make a living with his uncommon voice.

Marian Van Til

The voice is clear and strong; it has a kind of straight-arrow intensity with a slight, natural vibrato. The diction is impeccable: every word is understandable. Its only fault is an occasional and slight missing of the exact pitch, probably unnoticeable to most listeners.

But there's something about this voice's timbre, its tone quality, which those listeners will find unusual — and very likely, intriguing. It has a certain "bigness" they will associate with tenors or basses; but the range is alto.

Ronald Greydanus is a countertenor; his voice has been specifically cultivated to sing music of the early 18th century and the centuries previous. And that voice can best be equated with that of the female alto.

Until two years ago, Greydanus was a tenor. He sang in oratorios, recitals, and some operatic roles and "was making fairly good money as a tenor," he says. But then, in consultation with his voice teacher and several other professsors at the University of Toronto where he was studying music, he switched to countertenor. So now he's working hard to become known as a countertenor and to get in a performing groove with the kind of musical groups that specialize in early music — many have sprung up in the last decade. (There are various successful ones in Toronto, including the acclaimed Tafelmusik Orchestra and Chorus. Vancouver is the other Canadian centre for early music.)

Discovering history

In the last 30 years or so, musicologists have discovered, intensively studied, and published editions of previously unknown Baroque and Renaissance works and a lot of earlier music as well. This research has also allowed many new editions of known works to come out.

In the last 10-15 years particularly, individual performers and performing groups have made use of much of that scholarly work, singing and playing that "new" old music, gearing their performance styles (and the types of instruments and voices used) to our new understanding of these centuries-old works.

That's where countertenors come in. In music of the early 18th century and earlier (Bach and Handel, Purcell, and especially their predecessors in England and Italy), choirs consisted of boys and men, and vocal music (solos, duets, etc.) was also written with male singers in mind. They sang in what we now consider to be the female range: boys or castrati (men who had been castrated specifically to preserve their beautiful "boys'" voices) sang soprano and alto; and "normal" men sang very high tenor, tenor and bass.

Those high tenors were known as countertenors. In our day, though, that designation applies to an adult male voice in the alto range. (Women, for the most part, did not begin to sing — or act — in public until several decades into the 18th century; even the first operatic roles involving female characters were sung by men.)

Thus, with the resurgence in popularity of early music, there has been a rediscovery of and demand for the countertenor voice.

Lest anyone wonder — and inevitably those unfamiliar with the countertenor voice and its tradition do — countertenor is really a highly developed falsetto, and falsetto is the upper range of which any male voice is capable. (Rock singers often sing in the countertenor range, but use a kind of unrefined falsetto voice that cannot properly be considered "countertenor.")

Raising eyebrows

Greydanus, 31, currently lives in Orangeville, Ont., with his wife, Susan (who teaches at the Christian school there), and his three-year-old daughter. He grew up in Listowel, Ont. He attended the University of Toronto's opera school in addition to studying with various well-known voice teachers and opera singers. He was the 1987 winner of an award (Arnold Walter Opera Scholarship) given by the Canadian Opera Company's Women's Committee. This year, he received another highly desirable honour: The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir Foundation Award, given to the Royal Conservatory of Music's "student showing outstanding promise."

As a countertenor, Greydanus participates as a soloist in Baroque choral works such as Handel's *Messiah* and *Dettingen Te Deum* or Bach contatas. He sings with church choirs, as a church soloist occasionally, looks for competitions to enter, and is preparing for a solo recital to be presented next spring at Toronto's Royal Conservatory.

Because very few people who aren't music aficionados are familiar with the countertenor voice, locally his singing elicits astonished reactions from audiences. "They think I sound like a woman. I pop a lot of eyeballs," says the jovial, six-foot-four inch Greydanus. "They always ask me if it's hard to sing up there. They can't believe it's not."

"I guess some of them think it's unnatural," Greydanus continues. "They don't understand that it's not. Or they think it's ... a medical thing," he adds, laughing, making a muted reference to the castrati of Renaissance and Baroque times. "I assure them, it's not!"

"I've never had any violent confrontations with anyone about my voice, but a countertenor friend of mine has — with other men [who question his masculinity]," Greydanus explains. "But he's somewhat smaller than I am," jokes Greydanus.

Need talent and confidence

Though Greydanus says he liked to sing as a child, during adolescence "you would never have got me to do that," he says. He never considered singing as a profession until a high school teacher encouraged him and "got me into the Ontario Youth Choir," Greydanus explains. From then on, he took singing seriously and his initial studies at the U. of T. were as a tenor.

Because performances are still somewhat hard to come by, Greydanus has a day-time job as a sheet metal worker. Though he has sent resumes and tapes out to a number of early music groups, and has performed with a few of them, he admits he may have to consider moving to the U.S. at some point to pursue his music career.

But when asked whether it's unrealistic to think that he may eventually be able to make a living from his singing, he replies confidently, "No, I don't think so." Early music has become very popular, he notes, and it's a matter of letting early music groups know you're out there. He admits that though there aren't a lot of countertenors in Canada, it's still difficult to break into the professional music world. But if you've got the talent and the confidence, Greydanus has no doubt that it's possible.

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

British evangelist expounds on Lordship of Christ

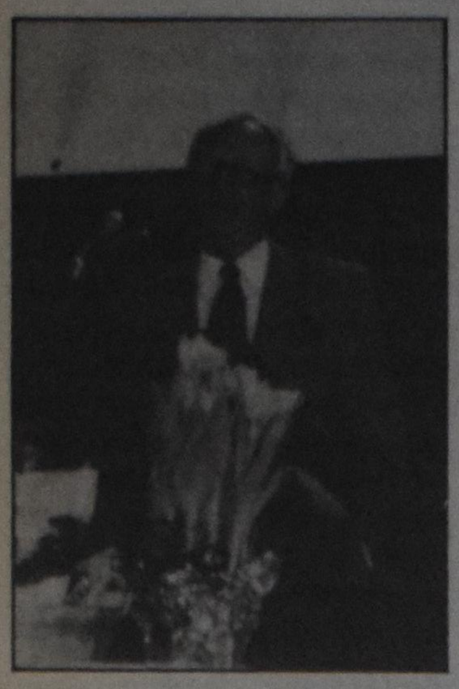

Photo: C.C. files
Dr. John Stott

Reinder J. Klein

VANCOUVER, B.C. — When Dr. John Stott, internationally known Anglican evangelist and Bible scholar from Britain, delivered a public lecture at St. John's (Shaughnessy) Anglican Church last month, the event gave new meaning to the term "wall-to-wall people."

Not only were people packed into the rear choir loft, they were also pressed into choir benches behind the lectern in front. There were people in aisles and standing against walls; a large crowd was even seated on the platform just in front of the altar.

And the whole crowd listened attentively to what may have been the most "Reformed" presentation most of them had ever heard. They were treated to a clear exposition of the every-day-life implications of Christ's Lordship. And in making his point, Stott referred more than once to John Calvin — and even Abraham Kuyper. Stott is the founder/director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity and the author of more than 30 books.

Stott told his audience that Christ's Lordship flows from his deity — the very quality so widely denied today. It is Christ's Lordship that is the common ground for all Christians, he said. But what is needed is a clearer understanding of all the implications and dimensions of that Lordship.

We need to recognize, as the apostles did, that we are servants, even slaves, obliged to new obedience, Stott asserted. We must be at Christ's disposal in a total, holistic manner. We must be Christians of integrity.

More than three-dimensional

There are intellectual, vocational, social and political dimensions, among others, to Christ's Lordship, Stott pointed out.

Our minds (which censor our emotions, Stott noted) are usually the last parts of us to capitulate to Christ. Free thought, Stott said, is not the same as freedom of thought. Thinking whatever we like brings us into the bondage of lies and falsehoods. Only within the context of Christ's "I am the Truth" can our minds be truly free, he added.

Regarding the vocational implications of Christ's Lordship, Stott rejects the long-established idea that the pastoral ministry is the pre-eminent vocation for Christians because we all must minister. Stott said the idea of ministry discussed in Acts 26 is "generic," in need of adjectives to be made precise. The pastorate is *one* of the ministries of Christ's Church, not *the* ministry.

Social implications of Christ's Lordship are reflected in Psalm 110, Stott believes. That psalm states that Christ has been granted the position of authority at God's right hand and the principalities and powers will eventually be wholly subservient to him — his footstool. Jesus is Lord by right *(de jure)*, even though Satan is still allowed to hold temporary sway *(de facto)* over our world.

But Christians must not acquiesce to satanic expressions of dominance, said Stott. Instead, they must strive to uphold God's justice by expressing Jesus' Lordship in the context of contemporary issues such as human rights, the environment, the poor, Natives, women, and all those who are abused.

Civil disobedience Christian protest?

Politically, Jesus was condemned by both Roman and Jewish courts. He submitted to both but refused to worship either of them. Similarly, Stott asserted, we ought to submit to the state only to the point at which we are forced into disobedience to God. Civil disobedience, therefore, is not unthinkable for us, Stott said; but he was careful to make a distinction between that and "Christian protest."

Asked about that point later, Stott explained that blocking the entrance to an abortion clinic, for example, or preventing others from doing what *we* may think is repugnant, may be Christian protest but it is not civil disobedience. The latter involves refusal to obey a *law* that is in opposition to God's will. Christian protest, Stott feels, loses much of its validity when or if it contravenes existing laws that in themselves do not violate God's laws.

Stott concluded his lecture by calling attention to the universality of Christ's Lordship: one day, *every* knee shall bow to him and *every* tongue confess his name.

The reaction to Stott's lecture by various Reformed audience members was summed up by one who noted that, while most of what Stott said wasn't new to him, it was "refreshing and exciting" to hear such a familiar message "flow from the articulate lips of a renowned Anglican" before such a large crowd in "a clearly inter-denominational context."

Canadian churches protest arrests of Christian leaders in El Salvador

C.C. Staff
From a report by Gloria Shephard

TORONTO — The Canadian churches' Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA) is deeply concerned about the continued persecution of church workers in El Salvador.

Among them is the American woman Jennifer Casolo, who works for Christian Education Seminars in San Salvador. She was arrested at her home on November 25 and charged with possession of a large quantity of weapons.

Also arrested was Rev. Luis Serrano, head of the Episcopal Church in El Salvador. ICCHRLA has received reports that he is being held in an underground cell and has been beaten.

Casolo maintains that she is innocent, a claim supported by Canadian Christians who have worked with her. Casolo has worked with several Canadian delegations to El Salvador in the past year, including a delegation of church leaders organized by ICCHRLA in September. A member of that delegation, Donna Sinclair, says, "The nature of Jennifer's work for Christian Education Seminars — organizing tours for Canadian and U.S. churches and politicians — and the fact that she had been reported being followed and had recently received a threatening phone call, indicate that she is the latest victim of a systematic campaign by the armed forces and government to defame the church and international aid workers in El Salvador."

Helping people a crime

Christine Stewart, Liberal MP and member of a delegation that went to El Salvador, said, "From what I know of Jennifer, the charges don't seem realistic .... I knew her as a non-violent activist who helped internationalists understand the situation in El Salvador." Helping people understand the situation seems to be a crime in El Salvador.

But the U.S. embassy in El Salvador, rather than presuming Casolo to be innocent and working for her release, has supported the allegations against her. This is in spite of a statement by the U.S. ambassador to El Salvador quoted in the *Miami Herald* in January in which he lamented the lack of progress in judicial reform and the administration of justice in the country. "There ain't no justice here," he is quoted as saying.

Casolo has been "shown" by the National Police at a televised press conference, reports Americas Watch, which says, "We abhor the continuing use of 'trial by television' to prejudice the cases of detainees by the Salvadorean security forces, and to taint the victim in the eyes of the population and the media."

ICCHRLA is calling on the Canadian government to help protect the lives of church workers attempting to defend peace and human rights in El Salvador. It is also urging Canadian churches and concerned citizens to send messages of protest to the U.S. embassy in El Salvador.

The Christian Reformed Church responded with a letter to Salvadorean president Cristiani on November 10 and urgent telegrams December 1 to Cristiani and to the head of the National Guard, Col. Slenker.

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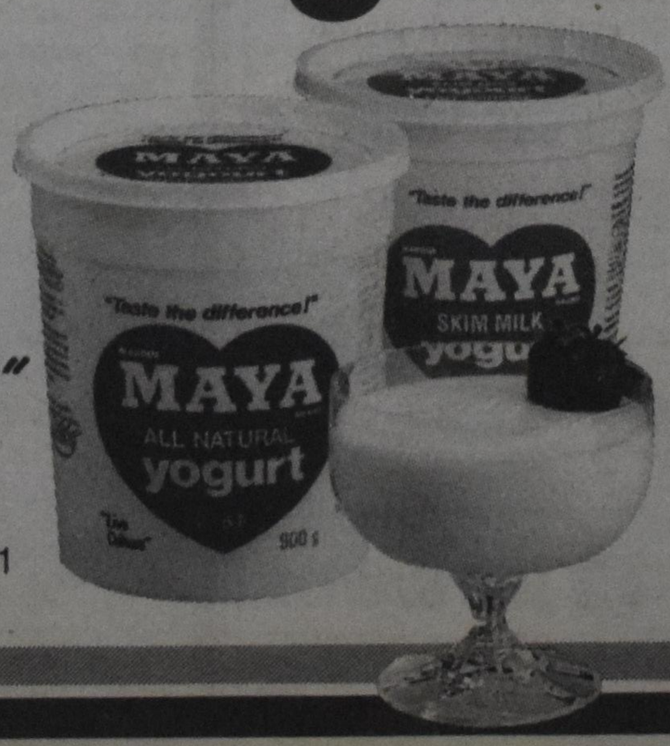

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A Presbyterian Comments

Examining our celebrations

Robert J. Bernhardt

R.J. Bernhardt

Over the last four centuries the people who have lived in the heritage of the Protestant Reformation have responded in a variety of ways to celebrating the birth of Christ. It may be good for us to briefly ponder what *we* personally do and why.

We must understand that some people in the generations immediately after the Reformation refused to recognize any special "holy days." In continued resistance to the multitude of saints days and feast days of the medieval church, they refused to celebrate Christmas as a special day. They experienced each Sunday as a commemoration of Christ in his birth, death and resurrection. To them, the Christian sabbath was adequate, and indeed, in the light of the abuses of the past, an altogether appropriate response.

Over the years, the spiritual descendants of the Reformation came to a more or less accepted list of special days to be marked with worship or some Christian celebration: Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost and Christmas.

Of these special days Christmas posed the most problems. First, it lacked the clear link to the Jewish calendar that, for instance, Easter had with Passover. It was acknowledged that the time in the year selected to celebrate Christ's birth was an arbitrary one. Indeed, it seemed as though the selection of this season had probably been motivated by the desire to provide a Christian alternative to an existing pagan celebration.

The second problem was that Christmas "caught on" and became an exceptionally popular holiday. It acquired a civic recognition that became severed from its Christian roots. So, as in our day, in those parts of the world where Christian influence had been great, Christmas was celebrated as elaborately and enthusiastically by non-believers as by those who were celebrating the Incarnation.

Serious challenges

In some parts of Christendom there was an attempt to separate the religious celebration from some of the civic elements. However, in North America that has never really happened and we are left with an intertwining of the "sacred" and the "secular" in a way which continues to provide Christians with serious challenges. What should we do in these times?

Should we do what some of my Presbyterian forebears in Scotland did and renounce all celebration of the season? Or can we take positive steps to enhance this celebration so that it both enriches the spiritual life of believers and offers a positive testimony to the world?

I offer to you the challenge that I accept for myself. I believe that we must be prepared continuously to ponder and analyse how we celebrate the great truth that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." How does the way we celebrate in our own homes and churches draw us to a greater appreciation of this great truth?

What forms of celebration might we do well to avoid, not simply because they represent secular excesses, but because they obscure rather than enhance what it is we wish to commemorate and share with our children? What may we do to help the broader world understand the mystery of grace that is at the heart of this holiday? How do we rise above a mere rebuke of ignorance and excess (valid as that may be) and offer some clear word of testimony concerning the Christ Child of Bethlehem?

As Christmas this year passes, let us seriously ponder this together so that what we do next year and the year after will be an even more appropriate resonse to the Lord of glory.

Robert J. Bernhardt is pastor of Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont.

Christians warned about autoerotic asphyxiation

GOLDEN VALLEY, Minn. (EP) — The Christian community isn't immune to the tragedy of deaths from autoerotic asphyxiation. This dangerous sexual activity that can cause accidental death through lack of oxygen to the brain has claimed the lives of Bible college graduates, educators, and children of Christian parents.

People engaged in this activity use a noose or some other apparatus to reduce blood flow to the brain during sexual self-stimulation. Victims of autoerotic asphyxiation are almost always male and are often teens. An FBI researcher estimated that 1,000 deaths in the U.S. in 1984, mostly of adolescent boys, resulted from autoerotic asphyxiation.

The Rev. Dr. Mark L. Laaser emphasizes that he's not an expert on autoerotic asphyxiation. But his work as director of the sexual dependency unit at Golden Valley Health Care Center has given him some familiarity with the subject.

While cautioning that no diagnosis can be made without individual evaluation, Laaser says autoerotic asphyxiation could well be a symptom of a recently-recognized psychological condition known as "sexual addiction." He says, "It's an example of the destructive consequences that sexual addiction can get to, that you'll need more and more of the same high to achieve the same level of excitement."

He adds, "That's basically what the [autoerotic asphyxiation] experience is about, about increasing the intensity of [the experience], and it's also related to the fact that for many sex is associated with pain, and with near-death stuff. There's the adrenaline, the intensity level that heightens the experience."

Christians are far from immune to the temptations and dangers of such behaviour, says Laaser. "A lot of Christians grew up with the idea that sex is bad, sex is painful. My guess is that there are some involved in this because of that." Laaser says many men involved with such a practice may inwardly be "very self-destructive .... They really don't value their own life that much." For this reason, merely pointing out the risks associated with autoerotic asphyxiation may not be enough to keep people from trying it.

Role of pornography

He explains, "Bottom line: this person is escaping some very negative feelings about himself. It's about loneliness, shame, not liking yourself, needing to be nurtured, needing to escape negative damaging feelings — and that you're willing to do that despite potentially negative consequences. The fact that there are negative consequences is not going to stop these people." In fact, he acknowledges, for some the risk of death may be part of the attraction.

Laaser says pornography will probably play a significant role in dangerous sexual practices. "One of my assumptions is that we're talking about sexual addiction. Pornography and fantasy are two of the building blocks in doing this. There's a high that's used as an escape. Pornography would be used to heighten the fantasy. If a person dies from this they're probably doing it by themselves, and they need images to provide the illusion of partners. That's where the pornography comes in."

A study by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company found that 250 of its policy holders die each year of autoerotic asphyxiation. Researcher Stephen Rosenblum said that of these fatalities, "pornographic material is almost always adjacent to the body."

What should Christians do to help families who lose a loved one to this practice? "It's a grieving process, that's the main thing," says Laaser. "These people really need a lot of opportunity to express the feelings they have, the disbelief, the shock, the numbness, the "I just don't believe this person I liked and respected did that." Parents will need a lot of opportunities to talk about their guilt and feelings of responsibility."

He adds, "A lot of Christians would be tempted to tell them not to feel that way. We need to let them know about grace, but not make them try to get rid of [their feelings] too quickly .... We as Christians are typically not very good at just listening. We just need to listen to this, and these people are going to need a year or two to talk about their feelings."

How can parents or spouses tell if a person is engaging in a dangerous sexual practice before it causes death? There may be warning signs, says Laaser. "Are you finding pornography around? Is the person isolating? Do there seem to be mood changes? Does the person seem to be depressed, withdrawing? Look for a lot of the same dynamics you'd be seeing around potential suicide victims. I can't emphasize enough the isolating, and they will be angry at you if you challenge them about why they're isolating. But if you're going to make an error, make the error in terms of being pushy in getting them some help. Drive them down to see a counsellor. Don't moralize or judge, but offer help in a nonjudgmental way."

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Feature

Robert VanderVennen

"It became utterly clear to me that the centre of gravity of Christianity has moved away from the West," remarked Dr. Paul Marshall upon his return from a four-month lecture tour of East Asia and Australia.

While on sabbatical from the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, Marshall spent a month of his travels in Indonesia and served as a delegate to the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelism held in Manila, the Philippines.

Photo: Paul Marshall

Loading "Marshall" the water buffalo on an outrigger canoe, with happy owners Moises and Lachita Capuli (right).

"The vitality of the churches in Asia is astounding," Marshall says. He had the special privilege of meeting with Christians who came to Manila from 190 different nations; he also met with Christians on their own turf.

Indonesia was the centrepiece of his tour which focused on Satya Wacana University, Indonesia's largest Christian University. The university was started in 1956 after the Dutch left Indonesia, but it carries some of the heritage of the Dutch. For a number of years Satya Wacana has been a sister to the Free University of Amsterdam, which has helped it in many ways.

In recent years scholars at Satya Wacana have promoted the study of Reformational Christian ideas arising out of the tradition of Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd. Stimulated by a lecture stint there two years ago by Calvin Seerveld from the ICS, a fund was started to make possible the translation of a number of writings from the ICS into the Indonesian language.

It was into this fertile setting that Marshall came to spend three and a half weeks. He arrived after large sections of his book on Christianity and politics, *Thine Is the Kingdom*, had been translated into Indonesian. Marshall gave lectures in the university's faculties of law, theology, education and general studies. All but two of his lectures were translated on the spot by Rev. John Koster, a university chaplain who expects to come to Toronto next year to study at the Institute. In September of this year, Iskander Saher, a chaplain and lecturer at Satya Wacana, arrived in Toronto to study at the ICS.

Marshall also lectured for about 40 Christian leaders of the Bina Darma Foundation, meeting on the university campus in Salatiga. Church leaders, professors and other professionals came from all over the country for a week of leadership training. They eagerly heard Marshall's ideas on participation in public affairs arising from his Christian worldview. He resisted answering specific questions about their own situation, though, saying that he couldn't step into their shoes, and as a theoretician he knows "you can't solve problems with theory alone."

An interesting "side trip" was a journey of 1,000 miles to Medanand Brastagi, Northern Sumatra, where Marshall was asked to speak on economics for the synod of the Karo Batak Church. While there he also met various crocodiles and orangutangs.

Australia was Marshall's next destination, where he lectured for 12 days at the invitation of the Association of Christian Scholarship (ACS). That group's structure and ideas are similar to those of Toronto's ICS. The ACS' impetus came from the 10,000 Dutch Reformed immigrants to Australia. Its current leaders include Rev. Steward Fowler and Dr. Douglas Blomberg, the latter who has studied at ICS.

While in Australia Marshall spoke for members of Scripture Union and for students at Monash University, and he was interviewed for a half hour program of the Australia Broadcasting Company, Australia's national radio. Marshall also visited his close friends Evan and July Walker, who lived in Toronto at one time. Marshall discussed practical politics with Walker, who is a cabinet minister in the state government of Victoria.

Philippines experience was the highlight

The Philippines presented Marshall with his most moving experiences. He was a delegate at the 10-day Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, as was his wife Diane, who joined him there. Meeting with over 4,000 Christians from all over the world was a "fantastic, wonderful experience," Marshall says.

Marshall concluded that Christianity looks strong almost everywhere in the world except in the West. The number and vitality of Christians in parts of the world that hardly seem to Canadians to be on the map, is just amazing, he says. The experience of meeting Christians from every conceivable place (except China) was rich enough to last a lifetime. The scope and intensity of the meetings in Manila was mindboggling — 40 to 50 simultaneous workshops throughout most of the conference.

From Manila, Paul and Diane Marshall took a personal journey to the remote Philippine island of Culion. The island is home to several thousand leprosy patients,

Photo: Paul Marshall

Diane Marshall (centre) in church with leprosy patients.

Photo: Paul Marshall
Synod of the Karo Batak Church, Northern Sumatra.

Marshall discovers Christian vitality in the Orient

their families, and those who care for them. That, says Marshall, was the most powerful part of his whole four-month tour.

They visited Moises and Lachita Capuli, Protestant chaplains at the leprosarium, friends of Diane from the time she studied in the Philippines in the 1960s. Moises has leprosy and Lachita contracted it recently. Their three daughters, though, are still free from the disease.

The Marshalls have given financial support to the Capulis over the years, and recently contributed to the purchase of a breeding pair of water buffalos, one of whom the Capulis gratefully and playfully named "Marshall."

On Sunday there, the Marshalls attended *five* joyful worship services with the lepers, including some in the hospital wards. The patients asked the Marshalls to sing for them. Paul reports that he was terrified by this because he had never sung in public before. But he felt that it was better than speaking, as he didn't know what he could try to tell such people.

Another memorable and unsettling experience was to travel through the open ocean at night by outrigger canoe — part of the way, through a storm. When the storm cleared, the heavens revealed stars that urban NorthAmericans can only imagine.

Korean Christian vitality needs cultural expression

On his return to Canada, Marshall stopped over in Korea and lectured there for two weeks. This was easily arranged because the ICS has many academic Christian friends in Korea. He repeated history by lecturing in the hall of Tyrannus in Seoul, just as his namesake Paul did in Ephesus (Acts 19:9). Marshall also led a series of workshops with 30-40 university students, working with ideas from the ICS that the Korean students were already studying, and he spoke to the Graduate Christian Fellowship of InterVarsity, a group that included Japanese as well as Korean students.

One can get a feel for the Korean situation from the following story: One afternoon Marshall was casually requested to speak that evening at a prayer meeting of young people. He readily agreed, expecting an informal group of perhaps 20 people. As he and his host were walking to the church but were still two blocks away, they began to hear a sound that grew louder as they got closer. The young people were praying aloud, each audibly saying their prayers, as is their custom — all 3,500 of them! When they got to the church, the sound was so loud you couldn't be heard even if you shouted in your neighbour's ear, exclaims Marshall.

Among the groups for which Marshall spoke in Korea was an association that is founding Christian schools, one that is starting a Christian college, and an association of Christian writers. In countries like Korea there is an amazing vitality, a great energy in the church and everywhere, Marshall notes.

Christians in the countries Marshall visited often don't seem to know how to interact with their culture as Christians. They can be helped by our studies and writings about Christian worldview, Marshall thinks. There is really little more we can offer these Christians, he says, and much we can learn from them, especially about evangelization. But we can contribute from our Christian cultural reflection, and unless Third World Christians develop insight and skill in that area, their promising churches will decay like those in the West, Marshall fears.

Marshall has seen from his sabbatical tour through Asia why many Asian Christians have been turning to the ICS for the unique help in Christian thinking that the Institute offers. Everywhere he went, Christian leaders knew about the Institute and had begun working with its published ideas. For instance, Marshall's book *Thine Is the Kingdom* has been translated into Korean and Indonesian, as has Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton's book *The Transforming Vision;* other translation projects are also moving ahead.

Marshall was gratified to see that through the ICS, Canadian Christians are making this kind of low-profile but vital contribution to Christian development in Asia and other parts of the world.

Paul Marshall speaks at Tyrannus Hall, Seoul, Korea, with interpreter Byong-Yong Hong.

Poetry

The Bike

There's a purr of the bike underneath my controlling body. The slow release of the clutch, the slight acceleration of the engine as the machine throbs forward. The rough, yet smooth ride of the suspension, accelerating from one gear to another until contact is made, the momentum pushing, wheels spinning, then over the top, easy, then back down, a quick coast, the jolt of reaching the ground, the pride of conquering such a monster. On, riding on throughout the land, speed onward, then up, to almost nothing, as if sailing, then landing. The heat is rising from the machine searching for water, the sploosh, as it rides through a pool, steam rising from the engine, till all is dry. On to the journey's end, the sputter, the engine dies.

Stan Zandberg (Grade 9)
Bulkley Valley Christian High School
Smithers, B.C.

"Christ, why did you ...?"

Have you ever wanted to ask Christ a question about something you were unsure of?

I have wanted that opportunity on many occasions but particularly as I try to unravel the events of Christ's life on earth. It would be thought-provoking to talk with Christ about his feelings, thoughts and experiences as he travelled our planet many years ago.

The Grade 7 class agreed that the opportunity to ask Christ a few "toughies" would be exciting. In fact, as we started a new unit on Christ's life, all 26 students compiled a list of questions which they would like to ask him. Many of the questions were remarkable in their insightfulness, while others were humorous. However, all in some way helped us to a better understanding of who Christ is and an increased awareness of his tremendous sacrifice on our behalf.

Below are a few of the questions the students asked. Why not consider some of them during family devotions tonight? The conversation will be worthwhile.

"Did you ever have a 'best friend' when you were a child?"
"Did you ever want something but never got it?"
"Why didn't you heal everyone at once instead of one at a time?"
"Did you want to get married and have children?"
"How do you know when to come back down?"
"Did you ever get left out because of your faith?"
"How did you walk on the water?"
"Christ, why didn't you just kill Satan?"
"Did you have any doubts or troubles concerning your disciples sincerity or devotion to you?"
"Is it true that we will never get tired when we're in heaven?"
"Can a person get kicked out of heaven?"
"Did you know how to swim?"
"Christ, why didn't you ...?"

Doug Monsma and the Grade 7 class
West Christian School
Edmonton, Alta.

O Canada!

O Canada!
Land of plastic and fast food. Of
MolsonFostersLabatts. A land where
the day is run by time and the
Cosby show.
Land of exhibitionism,
girls
girls
showing Beemans' smiles (and
bodies)

O Canada!
Land of free enterprise: Survival of the
fittest,
while the poor and the notsofit are
left to rot.
A land like a great mosaic (of
racial hatred)
Those who have much,
despise those with little.

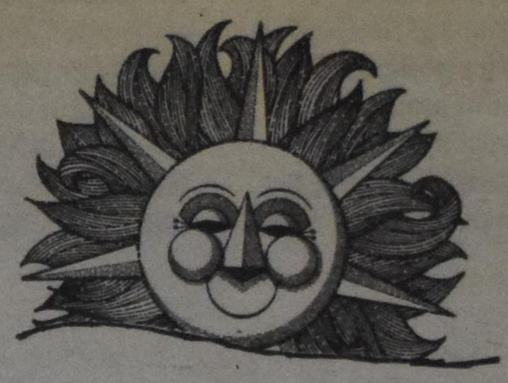
Oh Canada.

We stand on guard for thee?

Edwyn Visser (Grade 12)
Bulkley Valley Christian High School
Smithers, B.C.

These I love ...

A cozy, comfortable chair;
Lively, energizing music;
The placating hum of a computer;
Long, detailed letters;
The crisp juiciness of fried, breaded chicken;
A challenging math problem;
Juicy green grapes when I'm really thirsty;
The splendour of the setting sun;
Spooky, spine-tingling stories;
The slow, sleepy Sunday services;
The abstract scattering of stooks on a field;
An idle Wednesday;
Prose, with its hint of boredom,
And its usual glamour
And excitement.



David Adema (Grade 9)
Bulkley Valley Christian High School
Smithers, B.C.

Prime Time

The hard, harsh sound of an Old Year's Eve jake brake performance gives way to the slow, steady drone of the parts washer. Patches of red can be seen beneath the grime and grease on the workers' cover-alls. The random jarring and jolting dies out. Draining air lisps, hisses, roars. Cheering, jeering, bleering from an ooze of booze perfects the feeling of a modern prime time.

David Ademia (Grade 9)
Bulkley Valley Christian High School
Smithers, B.C.

The First Ice

The cold snatches my breath away
My toes cringe in my tight skates
A sprinkling of snow lies over the ice
Waiting for me
To fly out in the silence
With trees and winter birds watching
My skates cut lines and circles
And I soar out on the ice in freedom.
Melinda Paas (Grade 9)
Burlington, Ont.

Melinda Paas (Grade 9)
Burlington, Ont.

Education

Institut Farel: A growing light in Quebec

Photo: courtesy J.G. Zoellner

On Quebec City's south shore stands the new seminary building which Institut Farel hopes to buy on May 1.

J.G. Zoellner

"What do I desire, but that his light might blaze" was the personal motto of the 16th-century Swiss Reformer, William Farel. Known for his earnest zeal, booming voice, and flowing red beard, Farel was first and foremost a preacher and teacher of the Bible. Used by God to advance the gospel in Switzerland, he teamed up with John Calvin to have a wide effect in neighbouring France, largely through the Academy School of Geneva which trained evangelists and pastors for the Reformed churches.

Institut Farel, the only Reformed French-speaking seminary in North America, is named after William Farel. At the close of the 20th century, Institut Farel seeks to continue something of the character and the vision of the first Farel; but this time the place of action is French Canada.

Today, nearly 400 years after it was settled by Europeans, Quebec is a modern, secular, urban society. Less than one per cent of the population would call themselves evangelical Christians. Accordingly, the Reformed community in Quebec is focusing on evangelism and church planting, believing that through active proclamation and service, God will gather his people in a province where the gospel has not penetrated widely and deeply.

The challenge facing the church of Jesus Christ in French Canada is to reach 6.5 million urbanized, increasingly secular people of whom over 80 per cent speak French as their mother tongue. This evangelism work requires support and training, and that is the particular ministry of Institut Farel. Being firmly committed to the historic Reformed confessions, Institut Farel helps educate French-speaking Christians who will be able to live and to proclaim the gospel in modern society.

Incorporated in 1982, Institut Farel is a combination of theological seminary, evangelism training centre and rally point for the advancement of a vibrant Christian faith.

In order to reach its goals, Farel offers a seminary level education of high academic and practical quality. In addition to a three-year or a four-year bachelor's degree designed for future pastors and church leaders, Farel also offers a one-year certificate program, leadership training for elders, deacons and teachers, and evening and weekend courses. Being ever conscious of the need for balance between academic and practical competence, most of Farel's lecturers hold a master's or a doctoral degree, as well as having several years of pastoral experience in the French-speaking world.

As the number of students increases (at present there are three full-time and 22 part-time), Institut Farel has sensed the need to acquire larger premises. For this reason, Farel recently launched a campaign to purchase a $200,000 building in suburban Quebec City. The 5,000 square foot building includes a classroom, library, office space, rooms for students and visiting professors, and ample parking.

Institut Farel believes the new building to be an answer to prayer. They prayed for some time that God would provide a modest but usable and easily accessible building which could be used not only for Farel, but as a rallying point for Reformed and evangelical churches. Being in the provincial capital and only 10 minutes from a major university, Farel believes it has a golden opportunity to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ in many areas of Quebec life.

At present, Farel has raised $20,000 and needs to have sufficient funds in order to be able to buy the building by May 1990. The few Reformed and evangelical churches in Quebec are currently small, and it will be some time before Institut Farel will be able to receive substantial support from the community which it serves. For it $200,000 seems like a mountain, yet it is a relatively small amount when it comes to financing an institution of higher learning. That is why Farel is appealing to Christians outside of Quebec to help it by investing in this project. From an objective perspective, the $200,000 purchase price is modest and reasonable. Institut Farel believes, moreover, that such an investment will pay spiritual dividends in Quebec, in Canada and throughout the French-speaking world.

Though small by Canadian or American standards, Institut Farel is proof again that, like the army of Gideon, God blesses small ministries which have his glory at heart.

Rev. J.G. Zoellner is academic co-ordinator and professor of systematic theology at Institut Farel. The Institut's address is: 5377 Avenue de Marechal-Joffre, Charny, Quebec G6X 3C9.

Toronto's Institute attracts students worldwide

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — The full-time student body at the Institute for Christian Studies shows clearly the increasing worldwide outreach ministry of its witness in higher education. Students from Indonesia, India, Korea, Japan, Sierra Leone, France and England are among this year's students.

This year, Iskander Saher came from Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Indonesia. He has been an instructor and chaplain at the university and has been busy as an Indonesian translator of books by Paul Marshall, Brian Walsh, and other Institute professors so that the books can be used as textbooks at the university.

Joe Thomas is an East Indian who is an evangelist and teacher in his home country. When he was traveling in Nigeria he met Dr. John Boer and other Christian Reformed missionaries who put him in touch with the ICS.

Paul Tuvey and Paul Ferdinand have each come from England this year. Tuvey has a medical tool sharpening business in Bath, where he came to know ICS friends Mark Roques and Richard Russell. They encouraged him to come to Toronto for a year to develop his Christian worldview. Ferdinand is a student of the arts who was introduced to Calvin Seerveld in London.

Korean theology student Kui-Moon Oh spent a year at Calvin Seminary before joining ICS Korean student Kuk-Won Shin, the latter who is completing a doctor's degree at the Institute.

Other returning overseas students are Kanji Fuki and Julius Taniguchi from Japan, Esther Ajax from Sierra Leone, Jacques Fauquex from France, and Nik Ansell from England. All of them have fascinating stories about their backgrounds and how they came to study in Toronto.

In addition, the Institute has 11 full-time students from the United States, 12 from Canada and 18 part-time students. ICS currently has 12 students working on the PhD degree in its co-operative program with the Free University of Amsterdam.

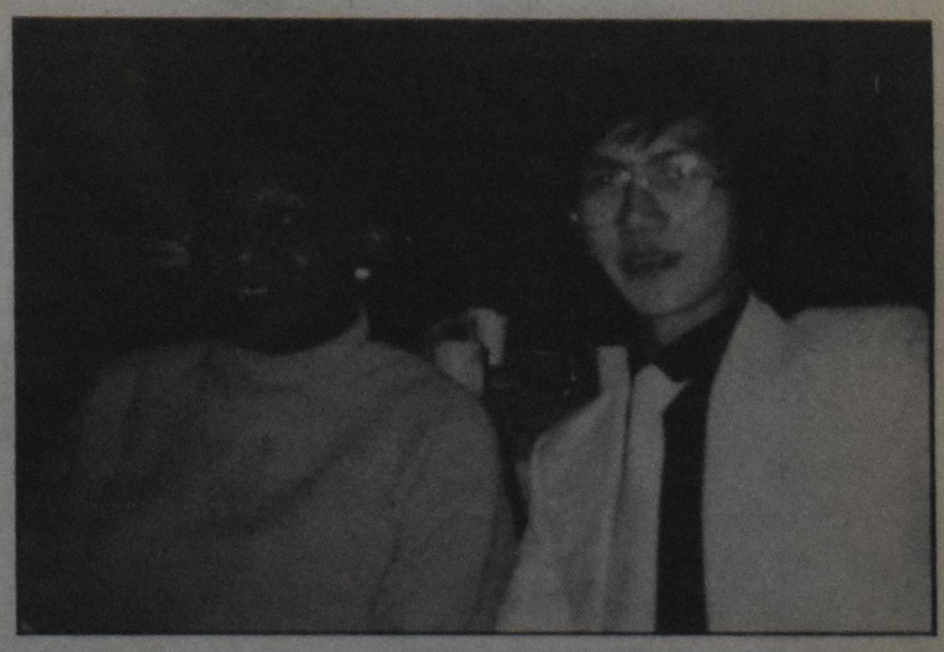


Photo: Robert VanderVennen

Esther Ajax from Sierra Leone and Iskander Saher from Indonesia study Christian scholarship at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

Calvin College awards scholarships to Canadians

C.C. Staff

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Scholarships have been given by Calvin College to 18 first-year Canadian students, the college has announced.

The highest awards, presidential scholarships, have been received by Robert VanderVelde of Edmonton, and by Ontario students Robert Zondag of Lynden, Teresa VanderMeulen of Sarnia, and Anita Tenyenhuis of St. Catharines.

Faculty honours scholarships were given to Clara VanHoff of Abbotsford, B.C. (who also received a multicultural scholarship), and the following Ontario students: Elaine DeVries of Dorchester, MaryEllen Schaafsma of Grimsby, Lucinda DeHaan of Hamilton, Julie VanderLaan of London, Irene Katerberg of St. Catharines and Willemina Zwart of Strathroy.

Honours scholarships were awarded to Carol VanderVeen of Blenheim, Ont., Timothy Tigchelaar of Hannon, Ont., and Gerben DeRegt of Sardis, B.C.

Calvin alumni scholarships were given to Kristin Smit of Langley, B.C., and Ontario students Richard Heuving of Dorchester, Carolyn Stienstra of Dundas, and Robin Tigchelaar of St. Catharines.

HDCH

Hamilton District Christian High School

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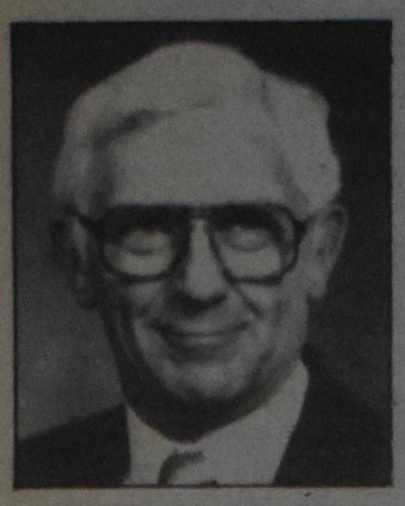
SKYLIGHTS/WILLIAM R. RANG



Light among us

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Not above us somewhere in the vast extent of space.

The heavenly light that streamed over the shepherds caused great fear, says scripture. This means that it was no candlelight. Candlelight does not cause fear; it creates sentimentality. But this light dispelled the darkness.

I remember darkness from the war years. No streetlights, no lit shop windows, no lamps shining from windows of homes. It was a darkness that made you stumble and bump into the things you could not see. Darkness is serious. It has a violent character all its own.

People usually see Christmas as a happy feast only. Certainly there is great joy, but it has a graveness as well. We must make sure we don't lose the seriousness of Christmas. Only the person who sees that the light of God began to shine brightly and powerfully at Christmas into a very dark world, to uncover and consume whatever cannot tolerate that light — only he or she can be joyful at Christmas.

But there is more. The Word became flesh and dwelt *among* us. Not above us somewhere in the vast extent of space. The light did not stop at our front doors so that it would not disturb us. *Among* us; right in the middle of our togetherness.

Allowing the light to penetrate

Christmas is a feast that calls us to make one of two possible choices. Either Jesus is the true centre of our Christmas celebration, or we pump our homes so full of turkey, wine, presents and more presents, cakes, and noisy folks that there is just no room for him. No room in the inn, no room in our homes. No room in our hearts, either. Our Christmas parties take care of that.

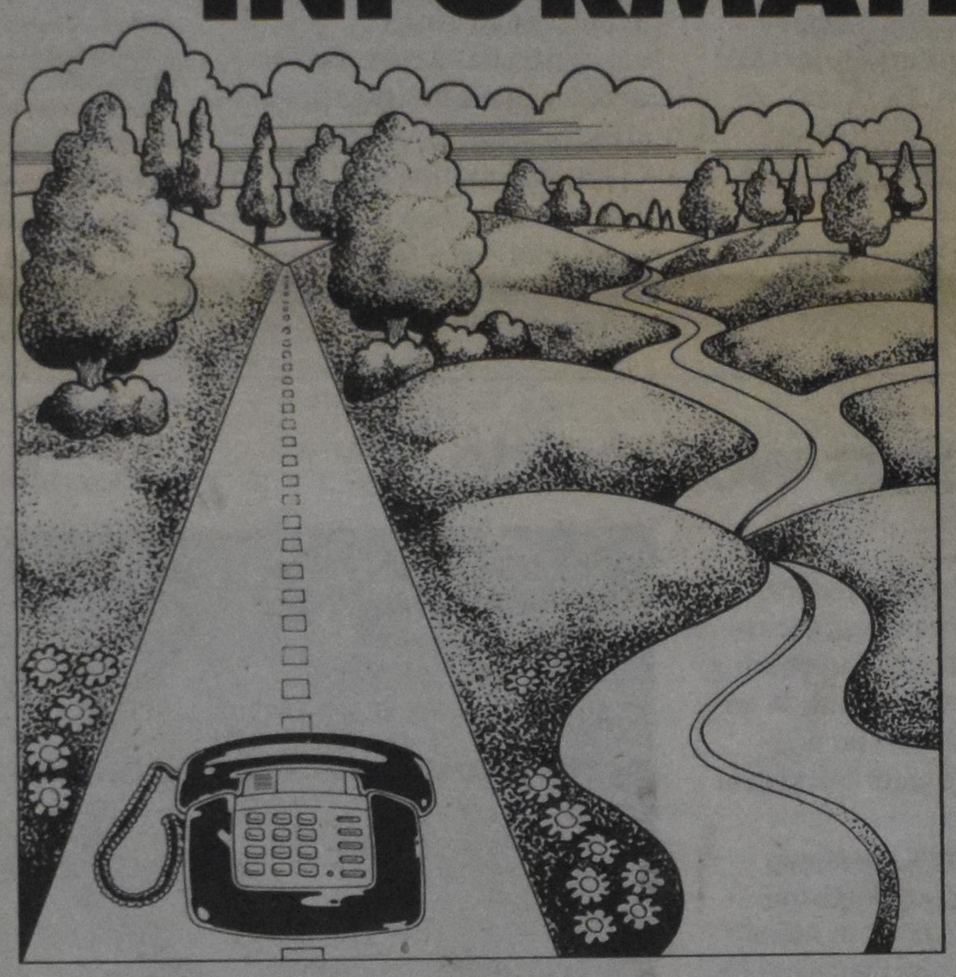
No room for Jesus; and yet he wants to be everywhere. Christmas is proof of the fact that God desperately wants to deal with us. He wants the Great Light to shine everywhere. Think of it: God went to great lengths to reach us. Now it is up to us to condition ourselves in such a way that he indeed can reach us. What God gave he did not give in darkness. He wants to surround us with his light.

And, oh yes, when the light really shines, we will also begin to notice the things that don't belong in our immediate surroundings.

Christmas: Light among us!

William R. Rang is principal of Dunnville Christian School, Dunnville, Ont.

SHORTCUT TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION



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Renfrew Christian is refused affiliation with public board

Bert Witvoet

RENFREW, Ont. — For more than half a year the local Christian school, which fears extinction because of low enrolment and an $80,000 budget, has approached the public school board to see whether there is room for an alternative school within the system.

It was the hope of people like principal Hank Schaly and public relations committee member Hubert Huyer that affiliation would be possible without surrendering control to staff, admissions and curriculum.

Schaly reports that the school's request has been denied and that it has come to the end of the attempt to seek alternative status. The Christian school society received the following letter from the Renfrew director of education D.G. Rikley:

At its meeting on October 25, 1989, the Renfrew County board of education considered the application of the Renfrew and District Christian School for alternative school status under its jurisdiction.

I regret to inform you that the Board has denied your request in this regard. The Board feels that a public school system should not support alternative schools which are established for the purpose of satisfying the lifestyles or religions of the parents but, rather, alternative schools might be established to meet educational needs of students and provide programs for students whose needs would be better addressed in other than conventional schools.

Renfrew Christian school also approached the Roman Catholic separate school board but has had no response from it. The Ottawa Valley population is 80 per cent Roman Catholic.

Health group promotes missionary/native partnership

Marian Van Til

BRUNSWICK, Ga. — "The key to helping the world's poor is to open up their power of understanding their problems and possible solutions rather than thrusting our knowledge and skill upon them."

That was the message a Christian Indian health care worker took back to New Delhi three years ago after MAP International's 11th International Conference on Missionary Medicine (ICMM). That is also one of the messages health care workers will return home with after the next ICMM to be held June 2-5, 1990.

The conferences have been held every three years since 1954 and are the largest regularly scheduled international exchange available for Christian health workers. They are sponsored by MAP International, a U.S.-based, not-for-profit Christian global health organization that provides "enabling services" which promote total health care for needy people in the developing world.

The 1990 theme will be "The Cost of Commitment: International Perspectives on Christian Health and Healing," says ICMM co-ordinator Richard Crespo. "The conference will set the agenda for the tough choices Christian health care ministries must make as they face the future."

"Just turning over an institution like a hospital to national leadership is not enough in today's environment," Crespo continues. "Mission and national leaders must create new ways to work together in partnership.

"Doing this means leaders will have to pay a price by giving up old institutions and old ways of doing things. There must be new forms of partnerships that enhance the dignity of everyone in the relationship."

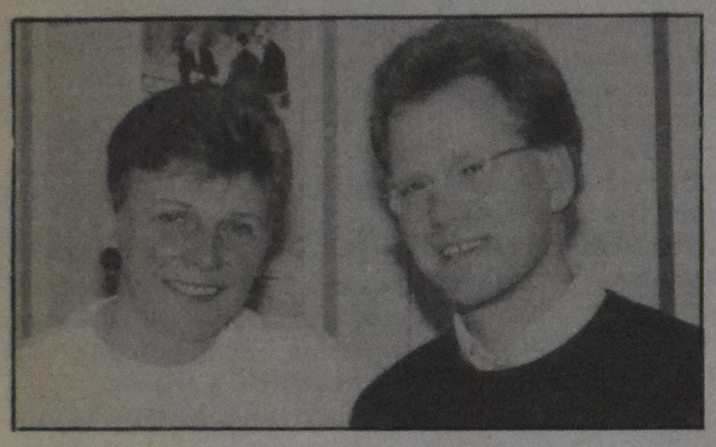
The conference will bring together world mission leaders like Mabelle Arole, founder of the Jamkhed Comprehensive Rural Health Project in India; Marilyn Birch, former missionary doctor in Sierra Leone; Samuel Escobar, professor of missiology at Easter Baptist Seminary; Dan Fountain, medical missionary to Zaire; Samuel Nkulila, Tanzanian psychologist and evangelist; and Ted Ward of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

"All of the speakers ... have successfully combined academic knowledge, field experience and a tremendous enthusiasm to serve," notes Crespo. "They also recognize that changes in the developing world are triggering rapid changes in missionary medicine."

More than 700 Christian health professionals are expected to attend ICMM 1990. Former attendees say the conference is vital for missionaries striving to make a difference in health care in developing countries.

C. Lal Rema of India, who attended ICMM 1987, explains that "in addition to inadequate facilities, poor equipment, shortage of medical staff and frequent power failures," his "challenges" include "malnutrition, poverty of large number of patients, infectious diseases and unsanitary living conditions in villages." That's why he says he "was glad to meet Christians with genuine concern for the people in poorer countries where health care facilities are almost non-existent for the poorer class of people."

Rev. Reginald Ebenezer, one of the ICMM speakers, and a key player in mediation attempts between the Tamils and the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, also praises the conferences and asserts their importance: "ICMM has helped promote a sharing of ideas and personalities and sparked off a global dissemination of progressive ideas on total health care — physical and spiritual."



Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P and M:

Our 27-year-old son is dating a 24-year-old young woman who none of our family members like. She is intelligent and attractive, but at the same time she strikes us as being immature and self-centred. She doesn't seem to be interested in us at all, while demanding a lot of attention for herself. When I could use some help, e.g., doing the dishes, she never pitches in. Once she even pulled a face when I asked her to help, which she then did reluctantly.

Our son doesn't seem to notice that she is a taker and not a giver. We are afraid that he is making a mistake by dating her. Love must be blind since he doesn't see through her.

Should we warn him or would our interference backfire on us?

Dear Worried Mom:

Your son already knows that you have reservations about his girlfriend. Intuitively our children read our faces and our voices. They catch what we say and especially what we don't say.

It's better to wait until he asks for your opinion. Sooner or later he will want your affirmation of this relationship. When things become more serious he will undoubtedly approach you and ask: "Well, what do you think?"

When that time comes begin by asking him what it is that he finds attractive about her. This question should be phrased positively, not cynically. Be prepared to listen and learn as he points out a number of things about her of which you have not been aware.

Only then, after he has had his say, should you hesitantly and lovingly state what you've observed about her. Do this gently! We agree that you should say something, but don't come on too strong. In these situations parents tend to overdo it because they believe that the stakes are so high. You don't want to drive your son into a defensive and potentially rebellious stance.

Your input must respect his age and even his freedom to make a decision which you can't understand. Whatever you say may be held against you for a long time if his friend becomes your daughter-in-law. Be careful what you say about her and how you say it.

When it comes to young love, you need the wisdom of Solomon. He would also advise you to choose your words and your timing very carefully. You're probably familiar with Proverbs 25:11. "A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver."

You may not be as familiar with Proverbs 12:18 which says: "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."

May God bless you with a choice of words that brings healing whether or not this relationship continues.

Dear P and M:

Quite a few of our church members patronize the business that my wife and I run. Some of them have run up large bills promising to pay soon. But in fact, they don't; then they are irritated when I remind them. As a result our cash flow suffers severely and we find ourselves delaying our payments to the church and Christian school.

The truth is that I often feel very angry and I'm sometimes upset enough to consider staying away from the Lord's Supper. What can I do? I can't really discuss my business affairs with my elder; or can I?

Dear Christian Businessperson:

You may discuss anything with your elder but not with a view of having this addressed in consistory or council. It is not their place to function as a collection agency for you.

It seems that you lack a clear credit policy. You need to be more forthright and professional in your dealings with all your clients, including fellow church members.

What procedure do you use? As an illustration of how to proceed, consider what happens when you don't renew your C.C. subscription. First you get a notice. This is followed by a friendly reminder of the due date. Finally you are informed that you will not receive any more issues.

If you don't have a standard set of letters like this that you can send out to your tardy clients, have them drafted as soon as possible. Establish a limit to your credit, or even a no-credit policy, so that your potential losses are limited.

Since you feel the need to talk to someone about this it may be helpful to get advice from another Christian businessperson in your community. The Reformed Christian Business and Professional Association may have dealt with this issue and may also be another resource for you.

Frankly, every Christian business may need the services of a collection agency at some point in time. Christian clients are not above the law, and longstanding, unpaid bills eventually become a form of theft.

We appreciate your generous and trusting nature but this does not excuse your lack of an effective credit policy. Once that's in place your anger will diminish. In business you need to be both personal and professional.

Some of your anger and frustration deserves to be directed at yourself. Your business policies and practices need to be seasoned with some tough love.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Bert Witvoet.

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Classified

Christmas Greeting

DE VRIES: A blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all my relatives and friends.
Mrs. Hilda De Vries, 2 White St., Apt. 112A, Sunset Homes, St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z2.

PASMA: We wish all our relatives and friends God's blessings at Christmas and in the New Year.
George and Alice Pasma, 263 Clark Rd., London, ON N5W 5E7.

VANSTAALDUINEN: A blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all my friends and relatives.
John VanStaalduinen, Christopher Terrace, 3131 New St., Burlington, ON L7N 3P8.

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Births	$30.00
Marriages & Engagements	$35.00
Anniversaries	$40.00
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Obituaries	$40.00
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All other one-column classified advertisements: $12.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $20.00 Letter under file number, $30.00 extra. Photos: $20.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.)
Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

OBITUARIES
Obituaries should be composed as they are to appear in *Calvinist Contact*. A sheet with information sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.
The $40.00 rate for obituaries covers any length up to six column inches. Calvinist Contact reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $12.50 per column inch.

NEWLYWEDS
Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in *Calvinist Contact* will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $15.00! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $15.00 and the couple's future address.

Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.
4-261 Martindale Rd.,
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.
Phone (416) 682-8311
Fax (416) 682-8313

Thanks

DE VRIES:
We would like to thank everyone who has shown support to us in the recent loss of our dear husband, father and grandfather, Wiebe De Vries. We appreciate your tokens of love expressed through visits, cards, flowers and prayers. We have felt God's sustaining love and presence through this difficult time. May our God bless and keep each one of you. Psalm 121.
Geeske De Vries and family.

VANSTAALDUINEN:
My heartfelt thanks to all those who made my 80th birthday a memorable one. The cards, flowers, gifts and best wishes were much appreciated.
John VanStaalduinen, Christopher Terrace, Burlington, Ont.

Accommodations

Roommate needed for January 1, 1990, to share a two-bedroom apartment in a fine residential area of southwest Hamilton. Rent is currently $380/month each, utilities included. If you are interested please call Maynard at 521-9765 (evenings) or 575-9544 (days).

Births

HEERSINK (Koornneef):
Peter and Kim thank God for the safe arrival of their first child, a son

DANIEL BENJAMIN

born December 3, 1989, weighing 8 lbs. 8 oz. Sixth grandchild for Henk and Betsy Heersink, first grandchild for Art and Carol Koornneef. First great-grandchild for Len and Simona Los of California.
Home address: 68 Cline Mountain Rd. S., Grimsby, ON L3M 4B6.

VELDBOOM:
With joy and thanksgiving to our Lord, Father and Creator of all good things, we, Terry and Yvonne, announce the birth of our first child, a daughter

KIRSTEN NICOLE

born Dec. 1, 1989, weighing 8 lbs. 6 oz. She is the first grandchild for John and Beatrix Veldboom of Hamilton, Ont., and second grandchild to Wietse and Wilma VanHuizen of Beamsville, Ont. Kirsten is also the first great-grandchild for Henry Veldboom of Ebenezer Villa, Hamilton, Ont., and 13th for Beppe Hogeterp of Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont.
Kirsten's new home: 105 Southbend Rd. E., Hamilton, ON L9A 2B3.

Obituaries

On Nov. 28, 1989, at the age of 85, the Lord took home our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather

TIENUS DE JONG

He was predeceased by his wife Joan in 1981.
Dear father of:
John & Gertrude De Jong — Smithville, Ont.
Harry & Ann De Jong — Mt. Lehman, B.C.
Henry & Tieny De Jong — Mt. Lehman, B.C.
Jenny & Henry Jansen — Matsqui, B.C.
Ann & Albert Kampman — Matsqui, B.C.
Gertrude Hoogendoorn — Agassiz, B.C.
Corrie & Bill Kampman — Matsqui, B.C.
Ted & Ida De Jong — Matsqui, B.C.
Alice & John Dieleman — Agassiz, B.C.
Ed & Rhea De Jong — Matsqui, B.C.
46 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.
Funeral services were held on Dec. 1, 1989, at First Chr. Ref. Church of Abbotsford, B.C. Revs. Alvin Beukema and John De Jong led the services.
Correspondence address: Harry De Jong, 30944 Burgess Ave., Mt. Lehman, BC V0X 1V0.

For Rent

Four-bedroom detached home for rent in Holland Marsh, Ont. $750 per month plus utilities. Available January 1, 1990. Call (416) 775-2856 after 4 p.m.

Birthday

Congratulations to Riemkje Hartholt Van Schepen on her 80th birthday.

HARTHOLT-VAN SCHEPEN:
Congratulations on your 80th birthday Mom and Oma:

RIEMKJE HARTHOLT-VAN SCHEPEN

With joy in our hearts and praise to our God, we are thankful that we may celebrate, the Lord willing, the 80th birthday of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, on Dec. 22, 1989.
"Put your hope in God for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God." (Ps. 42:5a)
May God continue to bless you every day.
With our love and gratefulness:
Dick & Anne Broekema
Jim & Anita, Albert, Brenda & Ryan, Renee
Pieter & Nellie Plate
Albert, Astrid, Robert & Sarah, Walter & Nancy (friend), Ramona
Jerry & Stien Flikkema
Herman, Rhea, Albert
Arend & Olga Steenbeek
Renata, Wayne, Robert, Alan

Obituaries

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, what God has prepared for those who love him." (1 Cor. 2:9)
On Dec. 4, 1989, the Lord took to his eternal home, our dear friend

HERMAN SCHURINGA

born Nov. 15, 1898, in Middelstum, Groningen, the Netherlands. He was married to Grace Van Til on May 7, 1925. Our sympathy goes out to his beloved wife Grace, children, grand- and great-grandchildren.
Mrs. Nel Norg
Mrs. Marie Karsten
Mrs. Peet Kloet
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Poortinga
Mr. Bert Prinzen

On Tuesday, Dec. 12, 1989, after a valiant and courageous battle with cancer, our dear daughter, sister and aunt

RUTH VUYK
(nee Lunshof)

entered into glory. She was the much-loved wife of Martin Vuyk. Ruth was in her 48th year.
Loved daughter of Geert and Ge Lunshof
Loved sister of:
Margaret & Sam Buma
Albert & Jane Lunshof
Mary & Pete Vyn
Henry & Judy Lunshof
Ina & Siebert Van Houten
George & Ann Lunshof
and 21 nieces and nephews.
May God strengthen Martin, his children and grandchildren.
Psalm 23.
Correspondence address: 1415 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, ON L9A 5E3.

Obituaries

On Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1989, the Lord took unto himself our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

Mrs. FROUKJE E. KLEEFMAN
(nee Kleefman)

in her 87th year.
Beloved mother of:
Jean & Fred Datema — Sarnia
Grace & John Linker — Forest
Harry & Jenny Kleefman — Strathroy
Freda & Arend Nywening — Strathroy
Albert Kleefman — Sarnia
16 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Heike Braaksma of Sarnia.
Predeceased by her husband William Kleefman, five sons, one daughter, two grandchildren, one sister and two brothers.
Funeral services were held on Dec. 9, 1989, Rev. Jake Kuipers officiating. Meditation based on Job. 19:25-27
"My Redeemer lives."
Correspondence address: 2288 Churchill Rd., Sarnia, ON N7T 7H3.

Real Estate

For sale: on mild Vancouver Island, 6 bedroom home and inlaw suite on main floor with full amenities. 2 40x100 glass Acre greenhouses and accessory buildings on 4.5 acres of land. Owner retiring. Price $195,000. Phone (604) 723-5566.

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Teachers

AGASSIZ, B.C.: Agassiz Christian School requires a **primary** teacher effective April 1, 1990, with a possible view for employment for the 1990/91 school year. Interested applicants please send resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. Rick Esselink, Principal, Agassiz Christian School, Box 323, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0 Tel. (604) 796-9310 (school), (604) 796-3209 (home).

BRANTFORD, Ont.: Brantford Christian School invites applications for a **Grade 1** teaching position commencing March 1990. This could possibly lead to a single or doublegrade position next September. Please send applications to: Mr. C. VanderVeen, Principal, c/o Brantford Chr. School, 7 Calvin St., Brantford, ON N3S 3E4. Phone (519) 752-0433 (school) or (519) 752-4100 (home).

LACOMBE, Alta.: Central Alberta Christian High School requires committed Christians for high school **core** areas in 1990/91. Experienced individuals with energy and willingness to grow professionally with a new school and also work in extracurricular areas are encouraged to apply. Contact Mr. J. VandenPol, Central Alberta Chr. High School, Lacombe, AB P0C 1S0, or phone (403) 782-4535.

Teachers

Christian Education
In
Canada's Capital

OTTAWA, Ont.: If you are a specialist in **Remedial Education** or **Kindergarten,** are looking for new challenges and rewards, consider: **OTTAWA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.** An opening is available March or September 1990. Please inform us about your abilities, ask about our needs. Write: Wm. Van Dyke, Principal, Ottawa Christian School, 2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6. Phone (613) 722-5836.

RENFREW, Ont.: Renfrew Christian School is in need of a **teaching principal** beginning September 1990. Please contact Hank Schaly, principal at: Renfrew Christian School, Box 818, Renfrew, ON K7V 4H2.

TORONTO, Ont.: Toronto Central Christian School will have an opening in the **Primary grades** commencing January 1990. Please address your inquiries or resumé to Jack Couperus, Principal, T.C.C.S., 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, ON M4X 1C5, or phone (416) 968-2036.

Help Wanted

We need one full-time person (40 hrs.). Hours include one evening (Fri.), and every other Saturday. Work includes: serving customers, some typing, and all other aspects of Christian book selling. Requirements include a pleasing personality, willingness to work hard, eagerness to learn and a love for good books. Apply to store manager Mrs. Ina Klaassens or to owner Gerry Denbok: (416) 637-9151 (store), (416) 639-1075 (home).
The Family Christian Bookstore
750 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON
L7R 3N5

Full-time **housekeeper and nanny** wanted. There are four children in the family, ages 2-10 years. Please send references to: P.O. Box 69, Foxboro, ON K0K 2B0.

CARING FOR KIDS Mutual Support Systems, a residential program for children, is looking for families in the Niagara Peninsula that would provide foster care for a child in their own home. Please reply to:
Mutual Support Systems
R.R.#1, Perry Rd.,
Wellandport, ON
L0R 2J0
(416) 899-2311

Personal

Single female, 23, seeking male, 25-30 with same morals and ideas for friendship and possible serious relationship. Reply with photo to File #2530, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

Teachers | **Teachers** | **For Rent** | **For Rent** | **For Sale**

Toronto District Christian High School

One of our teachers is beginning a maternity leave on **March 19, 1990.** We are looking for a teacher to replace her for the remainder of the school year. The subjects to be taught are **French** and **Keyboarding.** Please send letters of application to:

Mr. Wm. Barneveld, Principal
TDCH, 7900 Kipling Ave.
Woodbridge, ON L4L 1Z5

Teaching Principal

The **Trenton Christian School** has an opening for a **Teaching Principal** commencing with the 1990/91 school year. Please send letter of application and resume to:

Principal
Trenton Christian School
20 Fourth Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N3
Phone (613) 392-3600

Applications will be accepted until Dec. 30, 1989

Administrator/Principal

John Knox Christian School of Woodstock, Ont., invites applications for an **Administrator/Principal** position for the 1990 to 1991 school year. We are searching for an individual who is committed to a biblical, Reformed theology and educational perspective. Experience will be regarded as an asset. A profile is available upon request. Please send inquiries to:

SEARCH COMMITTEE
C/o John Knox Christian School
800 Juliana Dr., P.O. Box 243
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Qualified individuals who are committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are invited to send letter, resume, and graduate transcripts to:

Dr. Douglas Ribbens,
Vice Pres. for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250
(712) 722-6030

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Dordt College

Openings for August 1990

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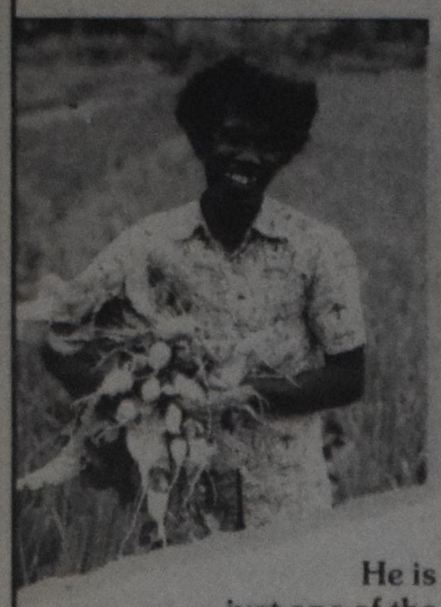

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Rev. Carl D. Tuyl
342 Arrowhead Pl.
Kingston, ON K7M 3L3

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Community CRC of Meadowvale
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"To admit that the terrible evil of sexual abuse exists within the churches is hard. But we must acknowledge it, for only then can we deal with the fear, hurt and shame."

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Penticton-CKOK	8:30am	800
Port Alberni-CJAV	10:30 am	1240
Prince George-CIBC	8:30am	94.3
Princeton-CKRP	8:30am	1460
Smithers-CFBV	9:15am	1230
Summerland-CKSP	8:30am	1450
Vancouver-CJVB	9:00am	1470
Vernon-CJIB	9:30pm	940

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Brooks-CKBR	8:00 am	1340
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New Glasgow-CKEC	7:30am	1320
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Atikokan-CFAK	10:30am	1240
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Chatham-CFCO	9:30pm	630
Guelph-CJOY	9:00pm	1460
Hamilton-CHAM	7:30am	820
Kapuskasing-CKAP	9:00am	580
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Sarnia-CHOK	7:30am	1070
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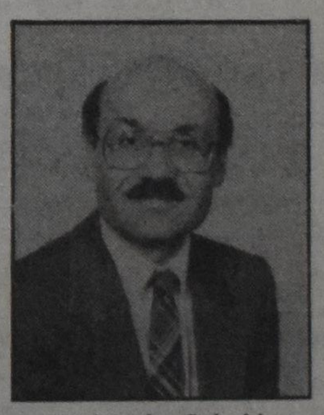
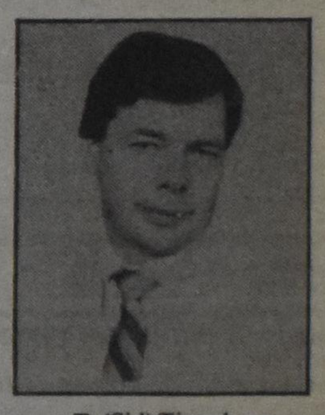


Christopher Solecki
P. Eng

Mr. F.J. Reinders, P. Eng., President of F.J. Reinders & Associates Canada Ltd. is pleased to announce the following appointments of senior officers in the corporation.

Mr. Christopher Solecki, P. Eng. as Senior Vice-President will be responsible for the leadership in the Facilities and Industrial Engineering Design Group. As Senior Manager, he has been in charge of project management for airports, industrial complexes and structural design.

Mr. Solecki has a Masters degree from the University of Toronto and joined the firm in 1981.



T. (Sid) Tjeerdsma
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Mr. T. (Sid) Tjeerdsma, P. Eng. as Senior Vice-President will be responsible for the leadership in the Municipal Engineering and Environmental Design Group.

As Manager of the Barrie Branch Office and previous management positions, he has dealt with project management in a wide variety of municipal infrastructure programs. Mr. Tjeerdsma is a graduate of the University of Waterloo and joined the firm in 1986.

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Events

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Mary VanderVennen, *Therapist, Christian Counselling Services*
Diane Marshall, *Therapist, Institute of Family Living*
James Olthuis, Ph.D., *Professor, Institute for Christian Studies*

Beginning with the conviction that the empowerment of self in community is the purpose of psychotherapy, this seminar intends to deal with a variety of issues that emerge in the practice of counselling. The aim of the course will be to create a forum, in which, from a biblical perspective, to explore theories, share experiences and develop strategies to enhance our ability to engage in the ministry of encouragement and healing.

TUESDAYS, 7 TO 10 P.M., JANUARY 16 THROUGH APRIL 17, 1990

SPIRITUALITY AND THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH

George Vandervelde, Ph.D., *Professor of Systematic Theology*

The aim of this course is to explore the communal dimensions of spirituality. Questions to be examined include the relationships of charismatic renewal to church renewal, charismatic gifts to professional leadership in the church, the role of women and men in ordained ministry, the task of the church in the face of the needs within and outside immediate community, and the unity and brokenness of the church at the local level.

WEDNESDAYS, 7 TO 10 P.M., JANUARY 17 THROUGH APRIL 18, 1990.

ICS
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Calendar of Events

Dec. 23 Christmas concert by the choir "New Life" (dir. David Braun) and the Male Chorus (dir. G. Hoekstra), 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.

Dec. 29 The Ambassadors and organist Christiaan Teeuwsen in concert, 8 p.m., Knox Presb. Church, **St. Catharines,** Ont. Admission $5.00 p.p., $3.00 for children.

Dec. 30 "Sing Hallelujah!" with the Ambassadors, Christiaan Teeuwsen, Harold De Haan and Carolyn Stronks; at 8 p.m. in First CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont.

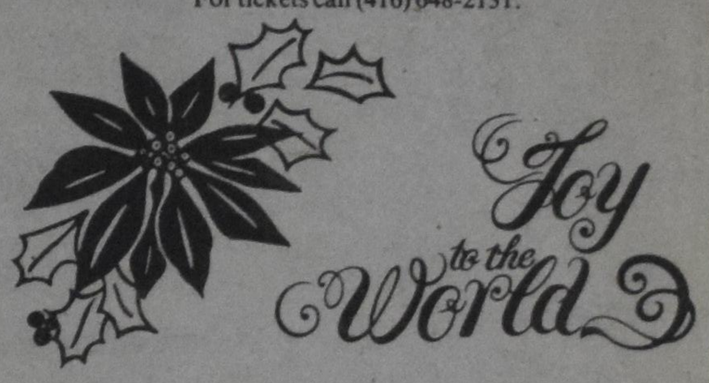
Dec. 30 Information meeting for seniors at 2 p.m., Heritage Hall, Holland Christian Homes, **Brampton,** Ont.

Dec. 31 City-wide hymn sing, led by Pastor Jake Kuipers, at 11 p.m. in First CRC, Exmouth & Murphy, **Sarnia,** Ont.

Jan. 13 Conference on Liturgy and Music "Lent-Easter Worship" at Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Registration $25 p.p. by Jan. 4. For info. phone (416) 648-2131.

Jan. 18 CFFO Board meets from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the CRC, **Georgetown,** Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.) or (519) 338-3214 (p.m.).

Feb. 9 "German Baroque & Beyond," a Stained Glass Concert with Boris Brott and the Amadeus Orchestra, featuring organist Christiaan Teeuwsen and the Redeemer College Choir. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Pre-concert lecture at 7 p.m. For tickets call (416) 648-2131.



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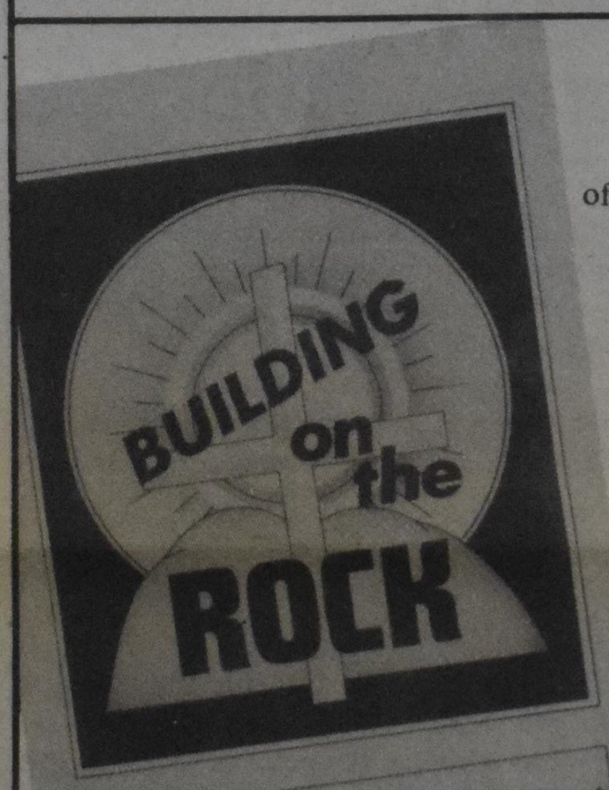

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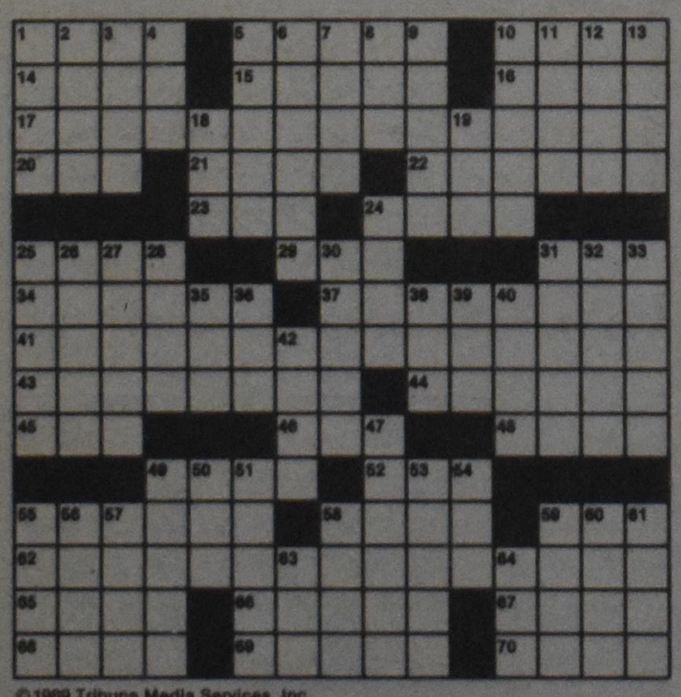
Weekly puzzle

by Fred Toole



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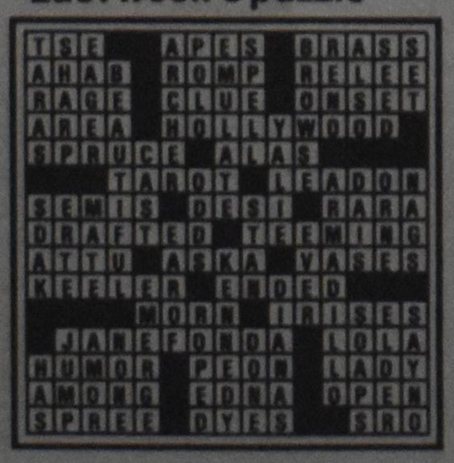
Last week's puzzle

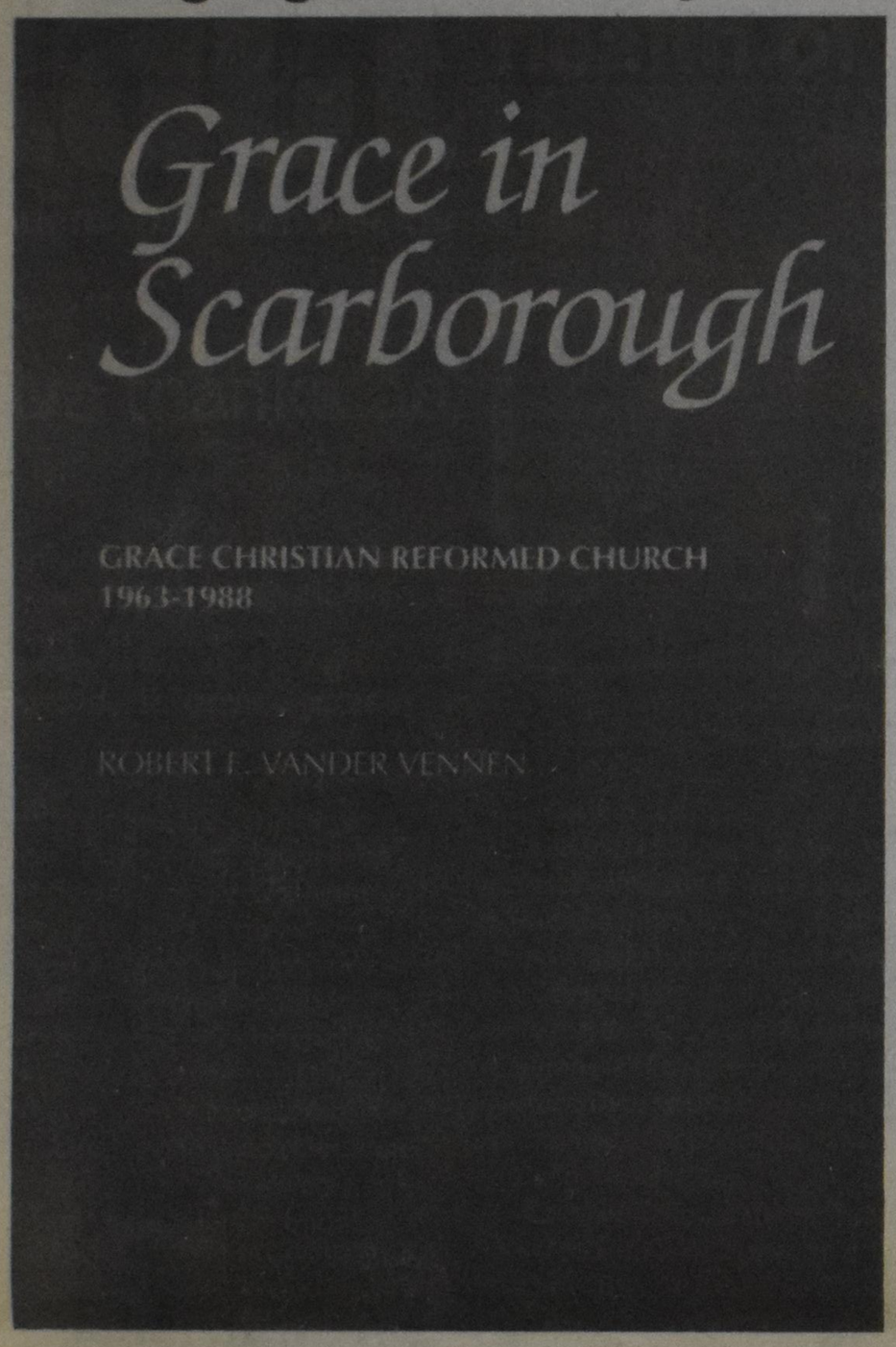


Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Church life

Immigrant church confronts changing community



***Grace in Scarborough: Grace Christian Reformed Church 1963-1988** by Robert E. VanderVennen. Toronto: Morning Star Press, 1989. Softcover, 117 pp., $9.95. Reviewed by Rev. Louis Tamminga, director of pastor-church relations for the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Mich.*

Grace Christian Reformed Church, planted in the borough of Scarborough in metropolitan Toronto, celebrated its 25th anniversary last year. The church grew out of First CRC in Toronto.

On November 10, 1963, the Rev. Francois Guillaume led the new congregation's first service in the Masonic Lodge at the corner of Ellesmere and Markham Roads. Three years later the young congregation adopted building plans designed by Bas den Hoed of the Willowdale CRC. Den Hoed produced a very attractive, contemporary design that became a symbol, if not an actual stimulant, for the further life and development of the Scarborough congregation.

Tracing the life and development of that congregation is the topic of this wonderful little book, *Grace in Scarborough* by Dr. Robert VanderVennen, for many years a member and elder of Grace church.

Grace in Scarborough is actually much more than a summary of the congregation's history. The book zeroes in on what it means to be part of the Church of Christ in an ever-changing metropolitan area.

Grace Scarborough is a reflective congregation, says VanderVennen; or perhaps more accurately, a church of action based on serious reflection. That is what I found Grace to be during the decade during which I was the pastor of its neighbouring church, Willowdale. During those years I often preached at Grace and discussed its well-being with its pastor, Rev. Jack Vos, with whom I established a very special friendship.

Grace, more than most churches I know, struggled with the tensions that come from caring deeply for its members while at the same time being deeply concerned about reaching out into the communities around the church. For the Grace congregation this meant honestly facing new situations, using new methods, introducing new programs and making necessary changes while ministering to its own members in a way that was meaningful to them. Through it all, Grace sought to be faithful to the Word of God and the confessions of the church.

How all this took place among real people in very specific situations is what *Grace in Scarborough* is all about. I was impressed again, reading Grace's saga, that it is never comfortable to be the Church of Christ. It takes much struggle and sacrifice to do the Master's bidding in the world. Grace, too, has gone through difficult times. It was the price she paid for never becoming a complacent church.

Even today, the Grace congregation is struggling to find the Lord's will for its ministry. What does it mean to be a congregation of Christ in the '90s? Grace's present pastor, Rev. Simon Wolfert, for many years a missionary in Brazil, embodies those ideals. Deeply committed to the Reformed vision, he is tirelessly concerned about leading the congregation to meet the challenges of this age.

One problem Scarborough faces is an enormous increase in property values. Young families can hardly afford to settle in the area. Many older families have sold their homes and settled elsewhere. The total membership is now at about 106 families, down from 160 in 1973. Had it not been for people from the community having joined the congregation this number would be lower still. But the Grace congregation is of good cheer because it faces the future with confidence and good hope for growth — growth in faith and understanding, growth also in many forms of outreach and service.

While reading *Grace in Scarborough* I was struck by two other things. First, the incredible amount of work done by a cadre of leaders and faithful members who gave so much of their talent and energy. (Blessed is the church that has such members.) The other, the large number of tragedies that took place among the membership. Grace was never a comfortable church, but the members did experience the comfort of their Saviour.

Grace in Scarborough is a book that, by relating the story of one congregation in its own setting, is itself a beautiful testimony to the Lord's unfailing grace to his people. A better title could not have been chosen. An honest and sympathetic account.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Glory

"The God of glory thunders ... and in his temple all cry, 'Glory!' " **(Ps. 29:3, 9)**

William Beebe, the naturalist, used to visit fellow nature-lover Theodore Roosevelt. Often, after an evening of good conversation at Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill home, they would walk across the lawn in the darkness. They would look up at the stars, point out the constellations and carry on a typical conversation like this: "There's the spiral galaxy of Andromeda! Did you know it was as large as our own Milky Way? Over a hundred-billion stars! And every one of them is larger than the sun! Seven hundred and fifty thousand light-years away! And there are a hundred million more galaxies like it out there!"

The numbers would get larger, the facts and figures more spectacular. And eventually they would shuffle on in silence, lost in wonder. Finally Teddy Roosevelt would say, "Now I think we are small enough. Let's go to bed!"

Piercing the veneer

"Creation was the greatest of all revolutions," said G.K. Chesterton. When young Anne Frank was hidden in an Amsterdam attic during World War II, fearful of the dreaded Nazi revolution and longing for a day in the park with her friends, she wrote this note in her diary: *The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be ....*

Even in the harshest of storms, as David notes in Psalm 29, the magnificent power of God is displayed. After Sir Ernest Shackleton returned from one of his Antarctic expeditions, he told of the intense suffering he and his two partners had endured: extreme pain, numbing cold, haunting starvation, consuming exhaustion. When rescued, barely alive, all they had left were two axes and a logbook.

"But in memories we were rich," said Shackleton. "We had pierced the veneer of outside things. We have seen God in his glory!"

A great word

There are only a handful of truly *great* words in the English language, says one scholar. They are the words without synonyms, the words that can't be explained, the words that sound like what they mean. And one of those words is *glory*.

Only the hushed whisper of that word can describe God, says David. Only the thundering roar of that term can tell what happens when he passes by. And only the shout of that cry fits the emotions that erupt in his presence.

"... In his temple all cry glory! Glory- G L O R Y!!"

Eyes to see

But bright lights can dim eyesight and the constant bombardment of God's glory can turn our timid spirits toward the dark places.

One person has put it this way. Imagine a family of mice who lived all their lives in a large piano. Music filled their piano-world, swelling all the dark spaces with sound and harmony. At first the mice were impressed by it. They drew comfort and wonder from the thought that there was Someone who made the music (though invisible to them) — above, yet close to them. They loved to think of the Great Player whom they could not see.

Then one day a daring mouse climbed up part of the piano and returned, very thoughtful. He had found out how the music was made. Wires were the secret; tightly stretched wires of graduated lengths which trembled and vibrated. They must revise all their old beliefs: none but the most conservative could any longer believe in the Unseen Player.

Later, another explorer carried the explanation further. Hammers were now the secret, numbers of hammers dancing and leaping on the wires. This was a more complicated theory, but it all went to show that they lived in a purely mechanical and mathematical world. The Unseen Player came to be thought of as a myth.

But the pianist continued to play ....

And those who hear the music cry, "Glory!"

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.